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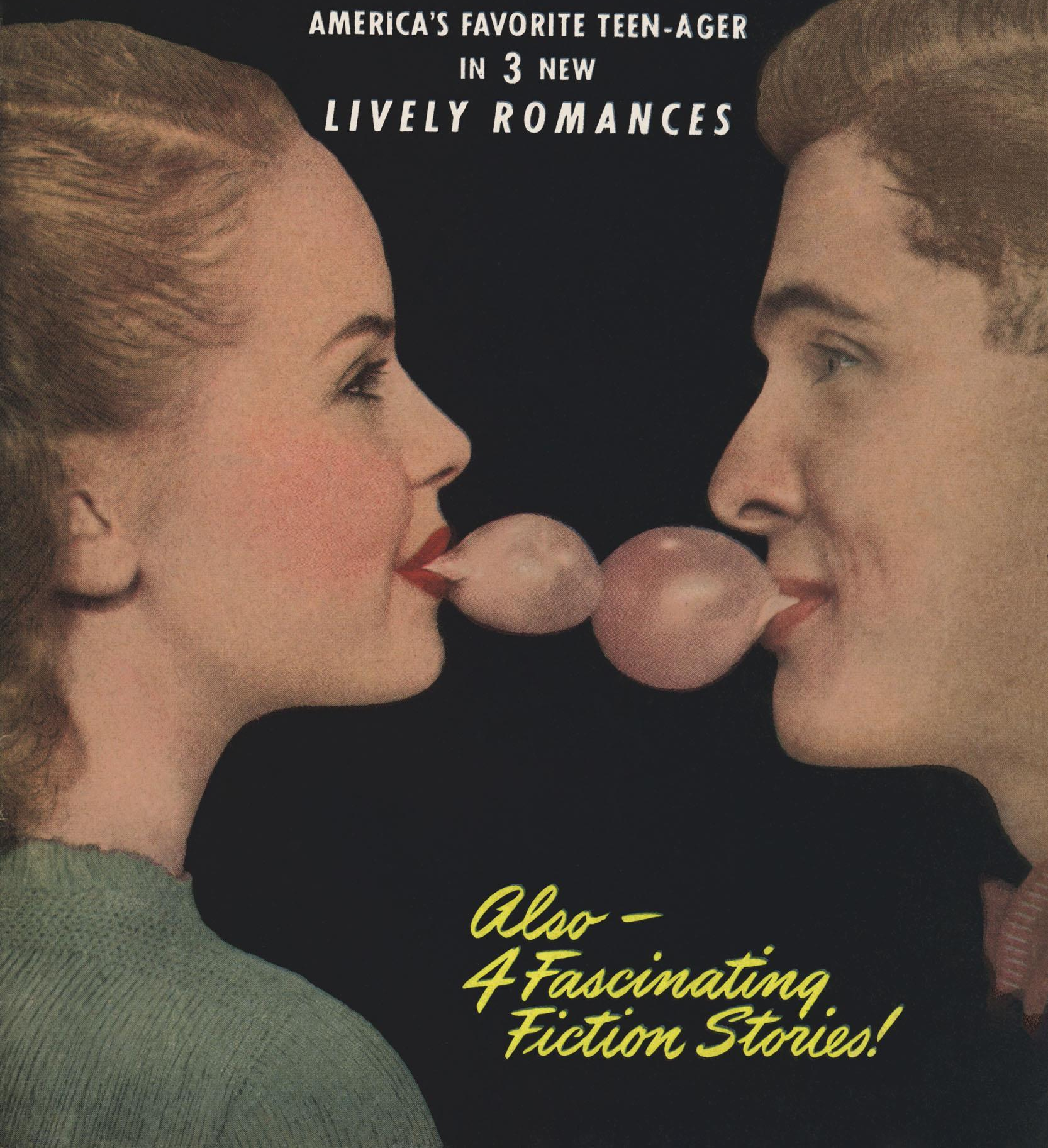
Miss America

10¢ JUNE

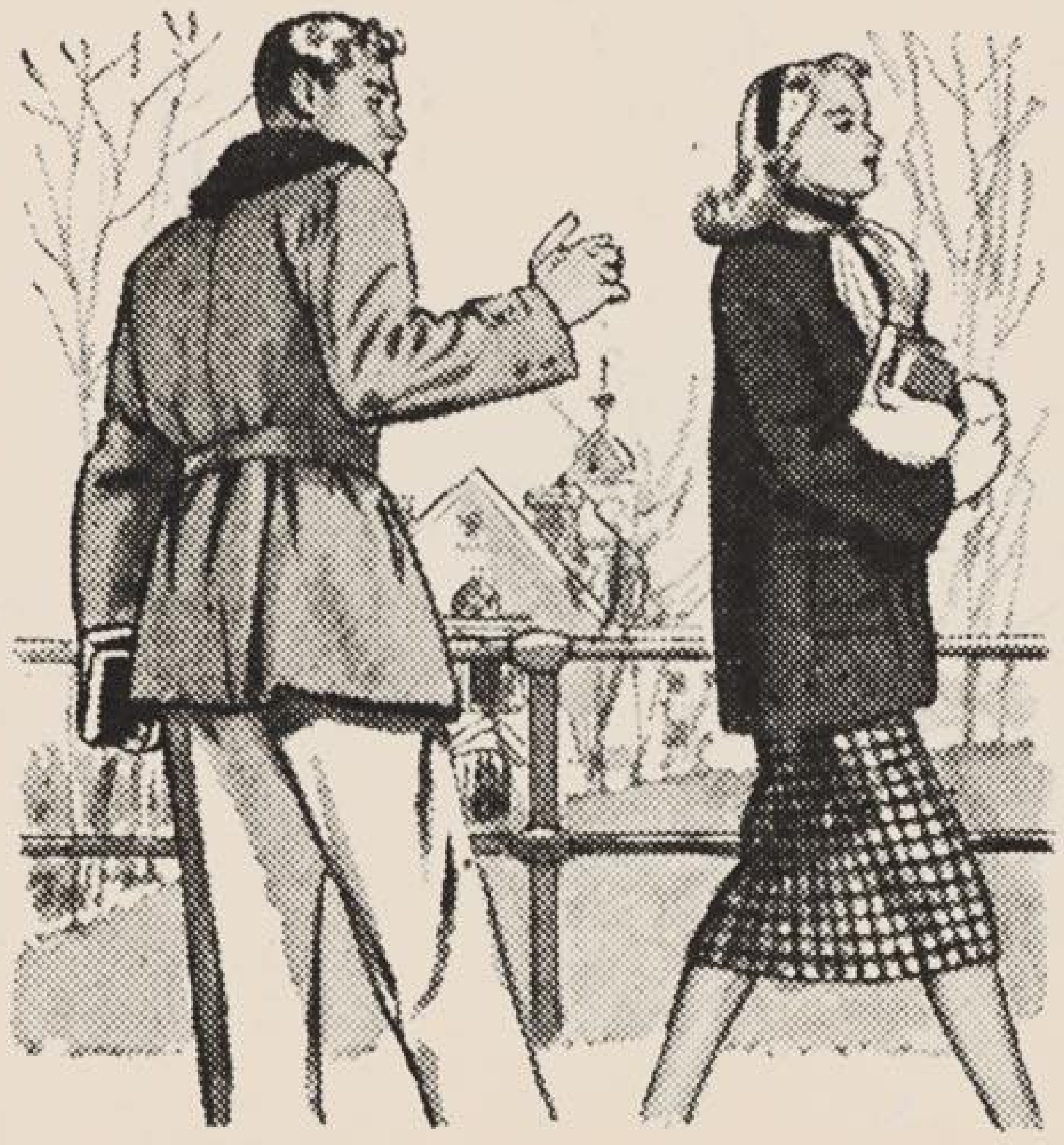
PATSY WALKER

AMERICA'S FAVORITE TEEN-AGER
IN 3 NEW
LIVELY ROMANCES



Also –
4 Fascinating
Fiction Stories!

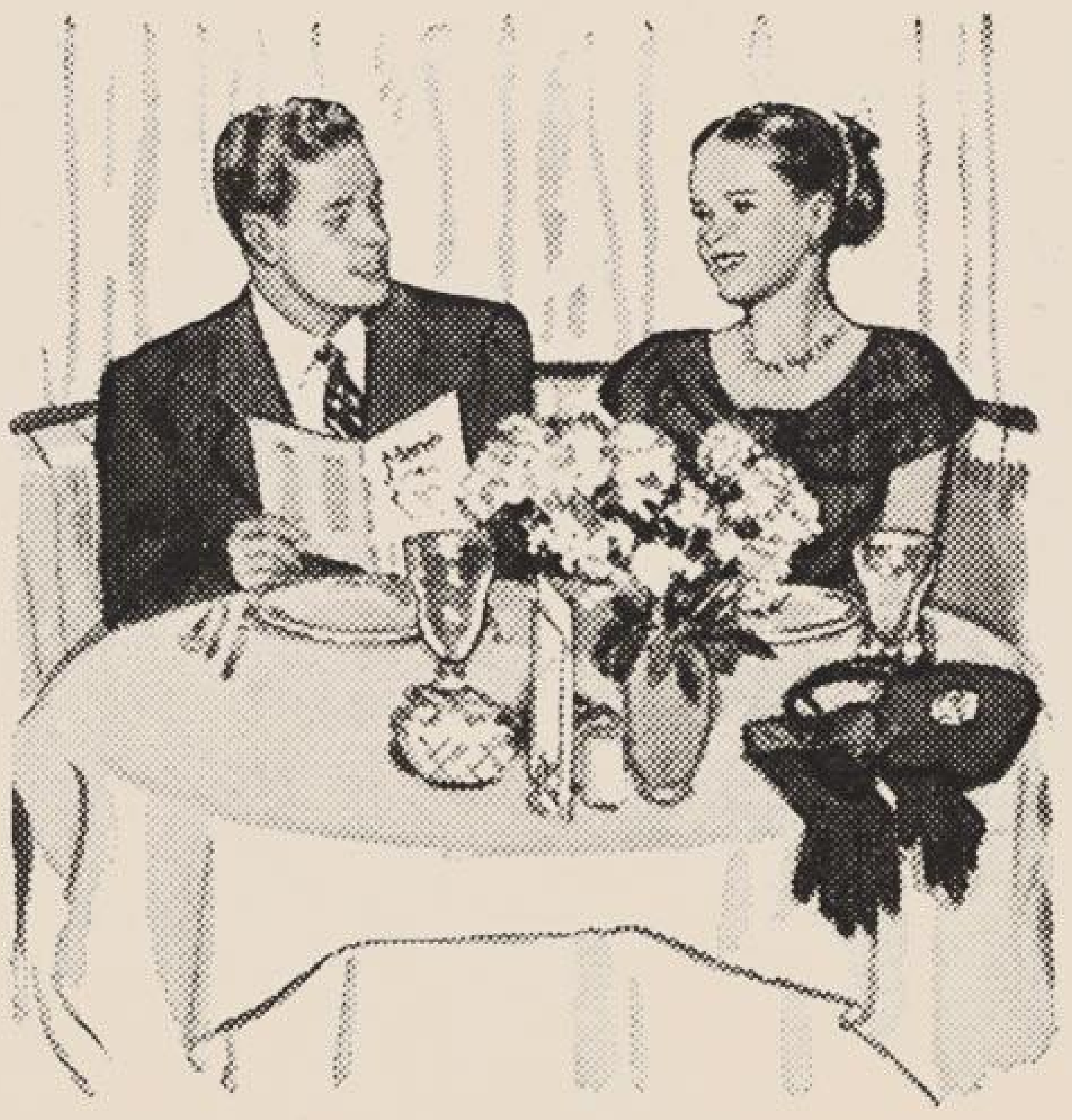
Are you in the know?



Why is she giving him the go-by?

☐ *She's wolf-wary*
☐ *She's "specs" shy*
☐ *She's a snub-deb*

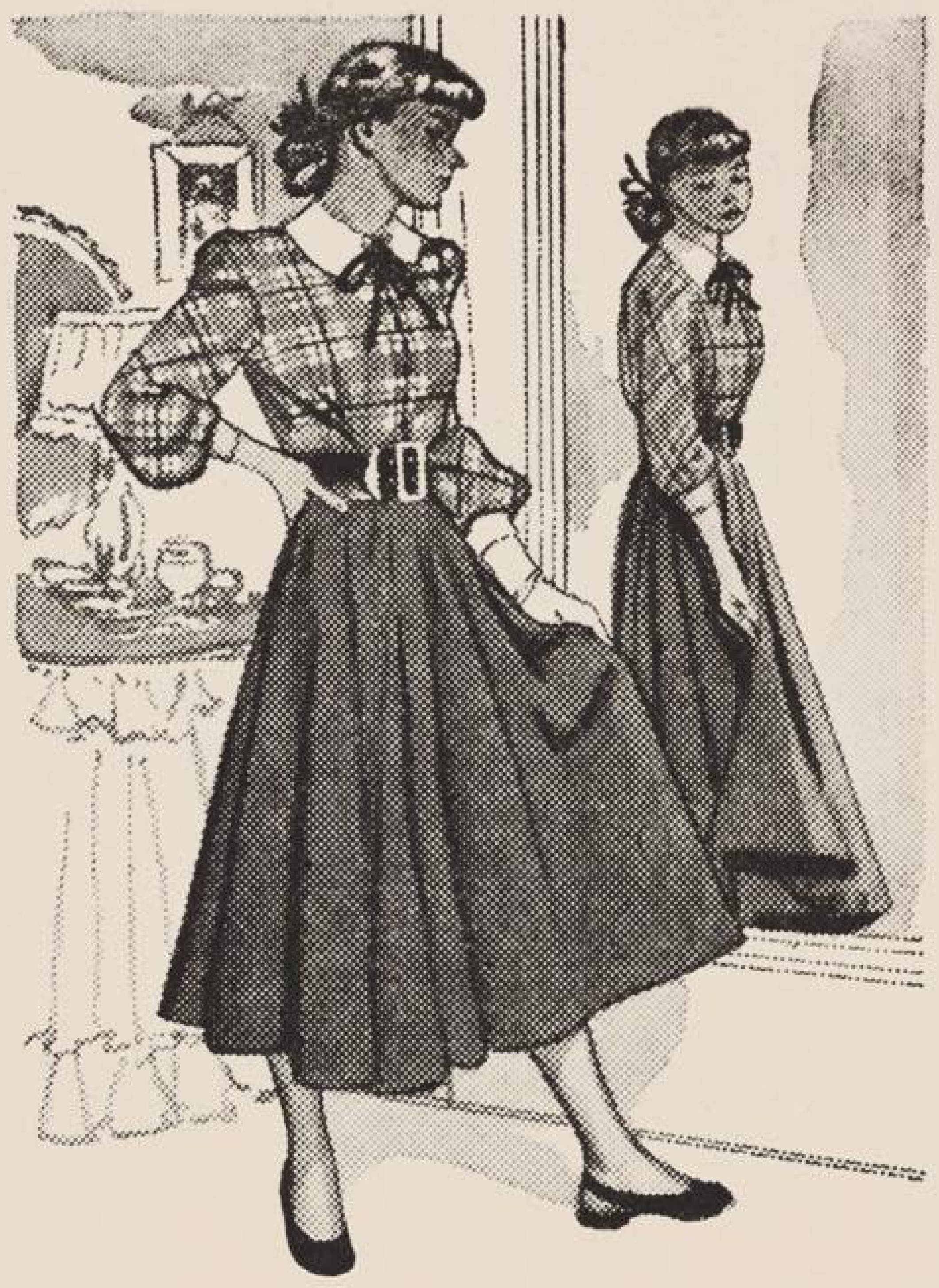
Maybe her Future just passed! She wouldn't know. Her glimmers need glasses. Why be "specs" shy? Lenses today can look mighty swish if you buy frames that flatter your features, your coloring. They'll keep you from missing fun and friends. At certain times, if it's *comfort* you're missing—try the new, softer Kotex. For you've never known a napkin with such heavenly softness: downy softness that *holds its shape*. Made to *stay* soft while you wear it!



Where to park purse and gloves?

☐ *On your lap*
☐ *On the table*
☐ *Under your chair*

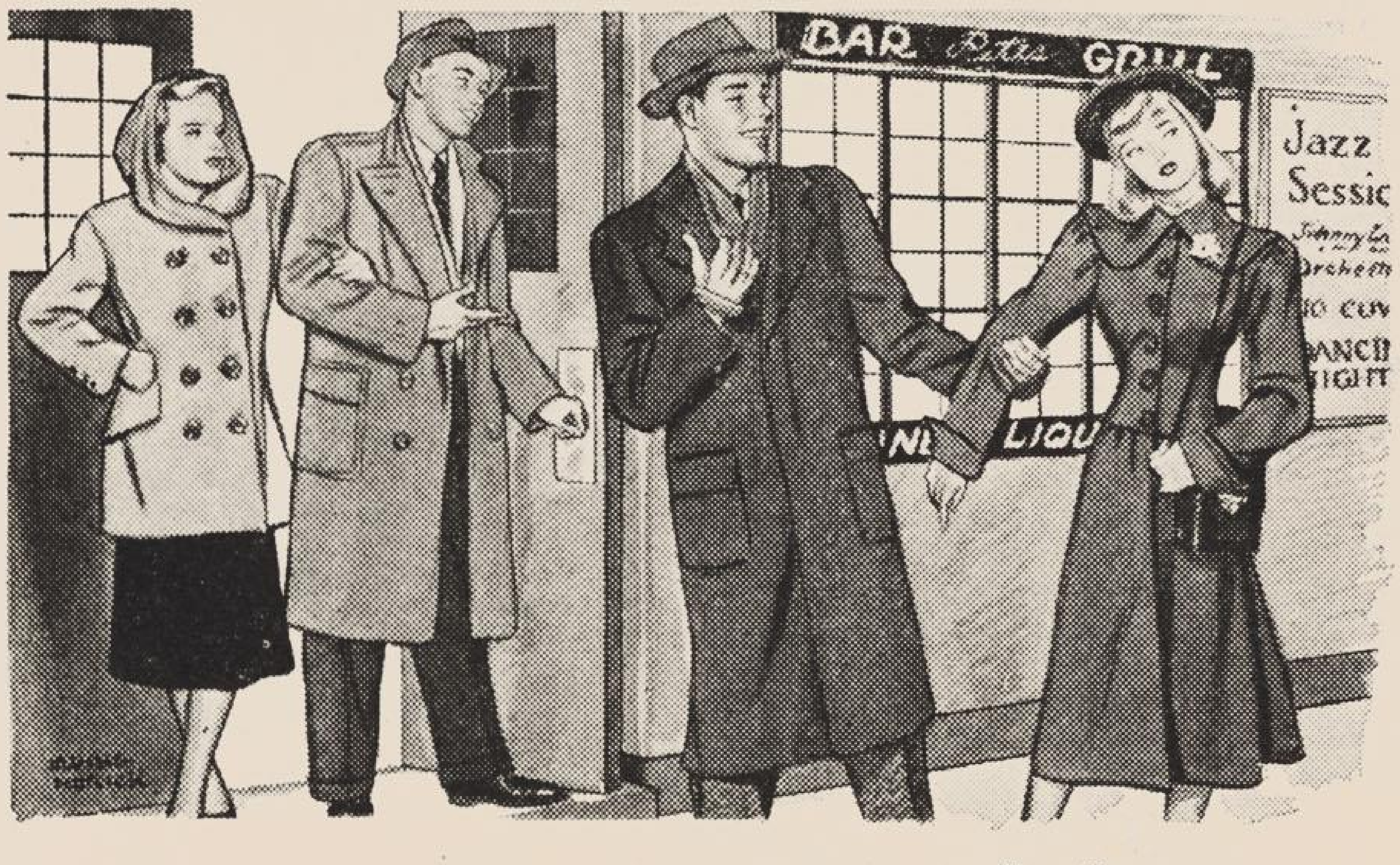
If you'd escape the raised eyebrow, remember this when at a restaurant: Accessories are taboo on the table. Avoid clutter . . . keep 'em out of the butter! The safe, proper place for your purse and gloves is on your lap. Let etiquette lead you, and poise is sure to follow. On "those" days, too, you can feel composed—knowing you're on the safe side with Kotex. That exclusive *safety center* gives you *extra* protection . . . a bonus for your poise!



In hem-lengths, is your best bet—

☐ *10 inches from the floor*
☐ *No-frump*
☐ *Half-calf*

Before you get ankle-deep in hemlines, get before a mirror and reflect. Consider, for instance, your height and heft. Too-long skirts dwarf tiny gals; give "tubba tubbas" a dowdy look. For towering teens, the ballerina's better than unbroken, "beanpole" lines. Be sure of a no-frump deal! Choose the length most becoming to *you*. Your choice of sanitary napkins, too, should depend on your individual needs. Try Regular, Junior, Super Kotex. See which suits *you* best!



If urged to go when Mom's said "no"—

☐ *Be cagey* ☐ *Pout and protest* ☐ *Lassie, come home*

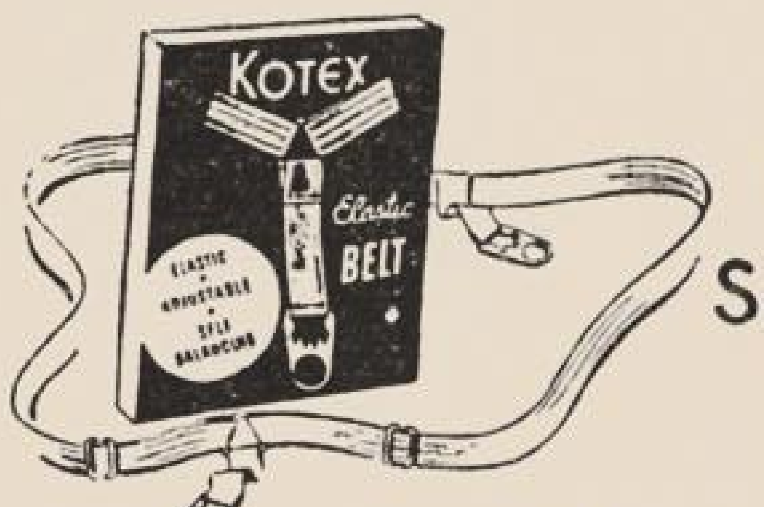
When the gang heads for forbidden ground—what's your cue? To moan about Mom (and be labelled "angel child")? Stamp your heels and be dubbed a bum sport? Be cagey! Suggest a spot where the eats or music's more fun. It takes tact! *Wherever* you go—at trying times, you're super-smooth when you've chosen Kotex. For "tactful" is indeed the word for those *flat pressed ends* that prevent revealing outlines!

3 guesses what girls forget most

☐ *Use hand cream or lotion*
☐ *Trim straggly eyebrows*
☐ *Buy a new sanitary belt*

Forget to keep your mitts well creamed . . . or weed out bristling brows? Not you! Fine. But how about remembering to buy a new sanitary belt? Why be like most girls, and keep forgetting—keep putting it off "till next time"? To get *all* the comfort your napkin gives, now's the time to buy a new *Kotex* Sanitary Belt!

Yes—because it's made to lie flat, without twisting or curling, a *Kotex* belt gives you snug, comfortable fit. It's adjustable, all-elastic . . . doesn't bind!



Kotex
Sanitary
Belt

Ask for it by name

KOTEX
SANITARY NAPKINS
KOTEX

More women choose KOTEX than all other sanitary napkins*

*T. M. REG. U. S. PAT. OFF.

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YOU, TOO, CAN BE MORE BEAUTIFUL-CHARMING and POPULAR! *At Once!*

"What has 'she' got that I haven't?"—Do you often ask yourself this question, wondering why some girls are popular and happy while others are lonesome and depressed? Here's the secret of popularity—you must "highlight" and dramatize your strong points, and hide your weak ones. When you learn how to do this, you have learned the "inside story" of a girl's success!

TAKE THOSE KINKS OUT of Your Appearance and Personality

Now you can have an amazing book, "BETTER THAN BEAUTY", by Helen Valentine and Alice Thompson (famous beauty, fashion and etiquette authorities), which tells you in exact detail how thousands of others have dramatized their charming points—and achieved astonishing popularity. You, too can learn—almost at a glance—how to highlight your most favorable characteristics of figure, of face, of mannerisms, of intellect. You, too, can learn how to be an interesting companion and conversationalist. You, too, can learn to be the kind of a girl that other girls envy and boys admire. "BETTER THAN BEAUTY" reveals to you the "mysteries" of feminine appeal and how you can quickly develop your own enticing charms.

FREE! with "Better Than Beauty" Famous *Queen Helene*

Complete MINT JULEP COCKTAIL FACIALS

MINT JULEP MASQUE
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WHIPPED
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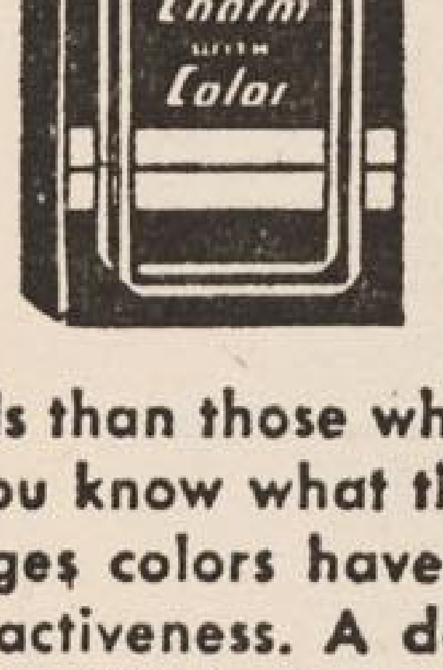
Have you always admired and envied the delicate beauty and fine skin texture of the famous fashion models? Then here's your chance to profit by one of their secret beauty rites. Try a Mint Julep Cocktail Facial in the privacy of your own home. It's the very same treatment designed by an outstanding dermatologist and now featured at the smartest Beauty Salons for as much as $2.50. After the rigors of a crowded day's schedule, many of the nationally known models find soothing, cooling relaxation with a Mint Julep Cocktail Facial. It's a jiffy routine that leaves your skin immaculately clean, fresh and young, and sets you up for fun of playtime hours.

FREE! This Truly Exciting Book Packed With Facts on "HOW TO CHARM WITH COLOR"



Girls who wear a certain color more readily receive marriage proposals than those who wear the other colors. Do you know what that enchanting color is? For ages colors have been used to enhance attractiveness. A doctor tells you the exciting scientific facts in "How to Charm With Color"—yours free with "Better Than Beauty".

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FOR EVERY GIRL WHO WANTS TO BE LOVELY "BETTER THAN BEAUTY"

A Complete Guide to Charm

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8. What you should weigh.
9. Table of Average Weights.
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11. If you are thin, putting on weight.
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14. When is a girl smartly dressed?
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18. The normal figure woman; how to select the most becoming clothes; what goes with what.
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20. Accessories are important relating to several costumes.
21. What men don't like in women's clothes or grooming.
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FOOD FOR FUN

SUMMER SALAD . . .

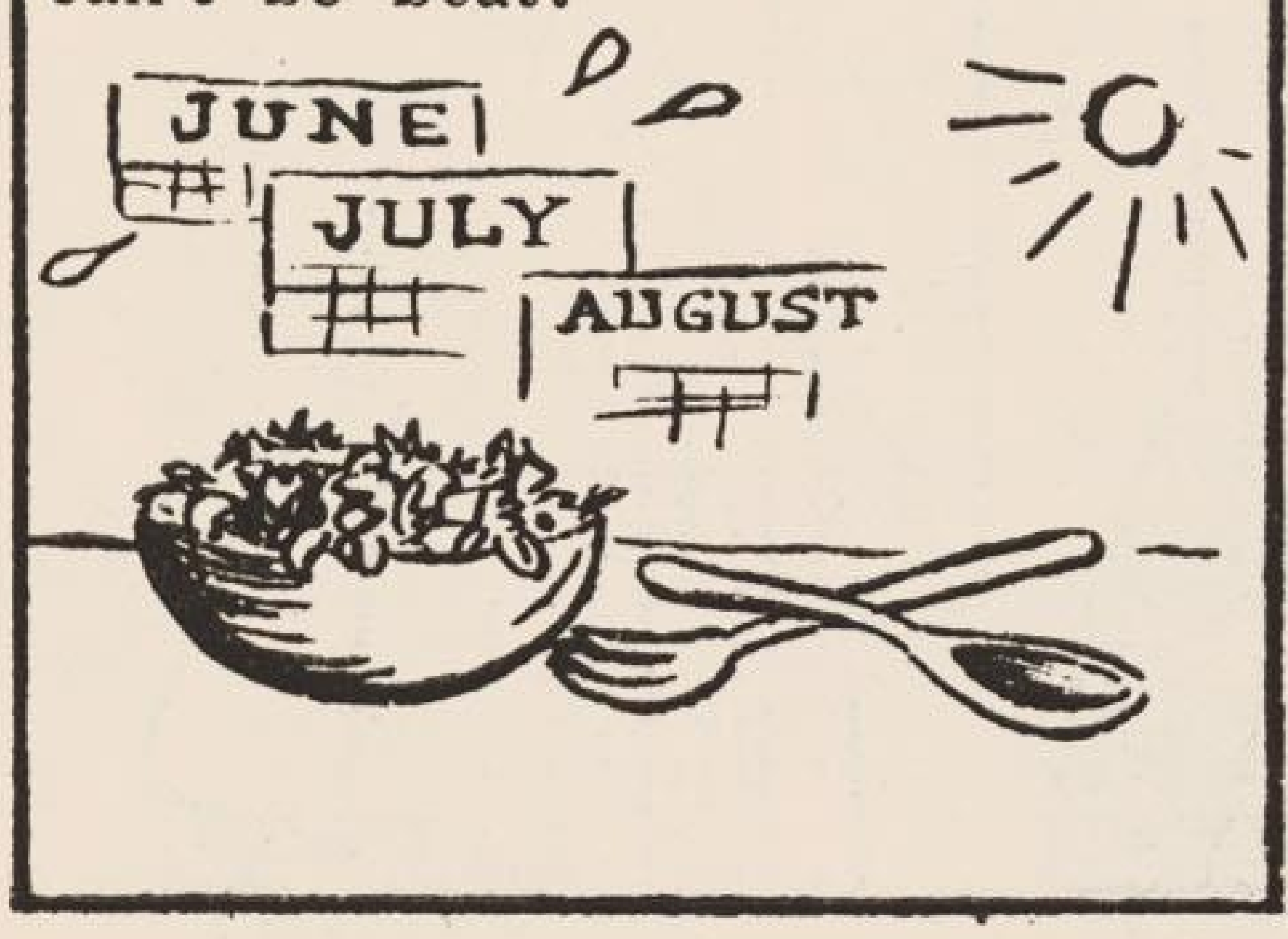
Wilting from the heat? Or do you just want a salad that's a bit different? Either way this grapefruit and romaine platter is the answer.

Wash and separate the romaine leaves carefully so they won't break. Discard imperfect leaves, or keep them to use next day in a torn green salad. Rinse them again in ice water, shake, and set them in a colander in the ice box to crisp.

Peel the grapefruit close to the fruit, removing all membranes, so that each section is clear and whole. Marinate pieces in lemon juice and a little good olive oil, and chill them.

When ready to serve, wipe each romaine leaf carefully so it is completely dry, and dip each in French dressing made with lemon juice instead of vinegar. Arrange the leaves, stems towards center, on a round platter, and place the grapefruit sections in the center. Pour French dressing over all. If you like, garnish with crescents of avocado for taste and color.

This salad must be quite cold to be at its best. But at its best it can't be beat!



TRUE or FALSE?

It's smart to skip competitive sports on those days!

TRUE. Since competitive sports may cause emotional strain, it's wise to avoid them this time of the month!

Are you in doubt about any do's and don'ts for "those days"?

You'll find the answers in the interesting illustrated pages of "Growing Up And Liking It."

This new book is full of teen-tips on beauty, poise and health.

Modess will send you a FREE copy if you mail the coupon below!

TRUE or FALSE?

Only younger girls should wear a smaller-size napkin!

FALSE: Age has nothing to do with the size napkin you wear. And now Modess gives you a choice of 3 sizes.

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Growing Up and liking it

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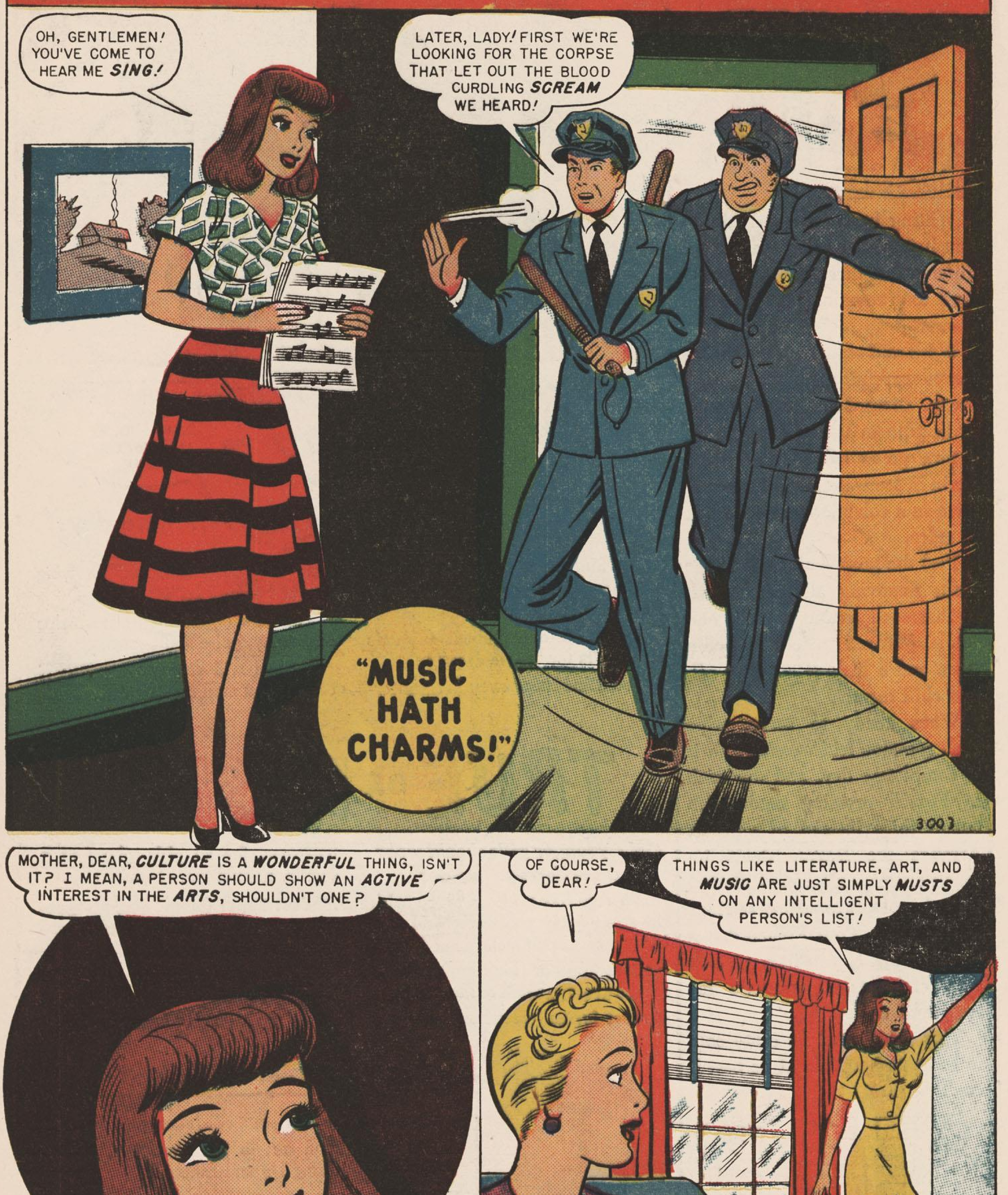
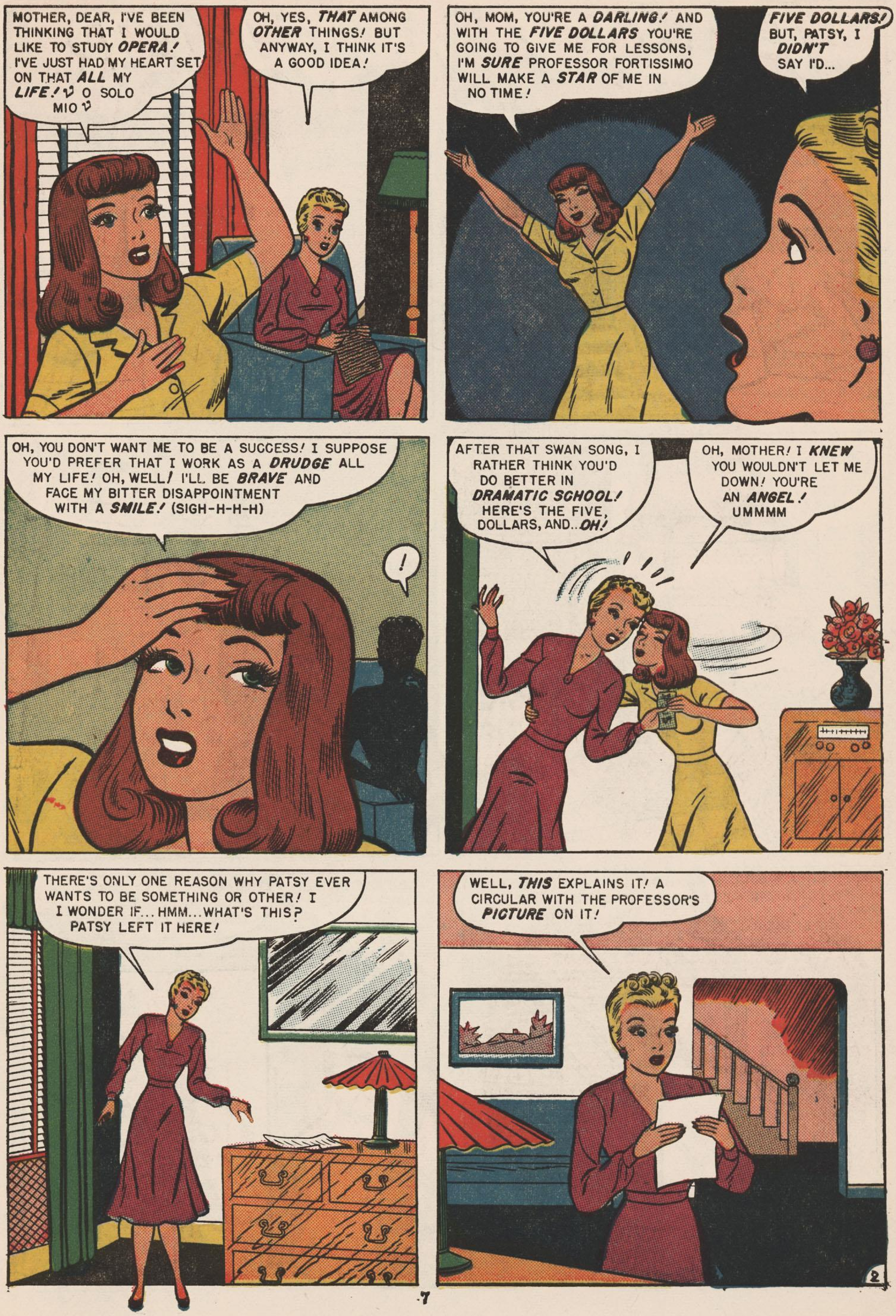
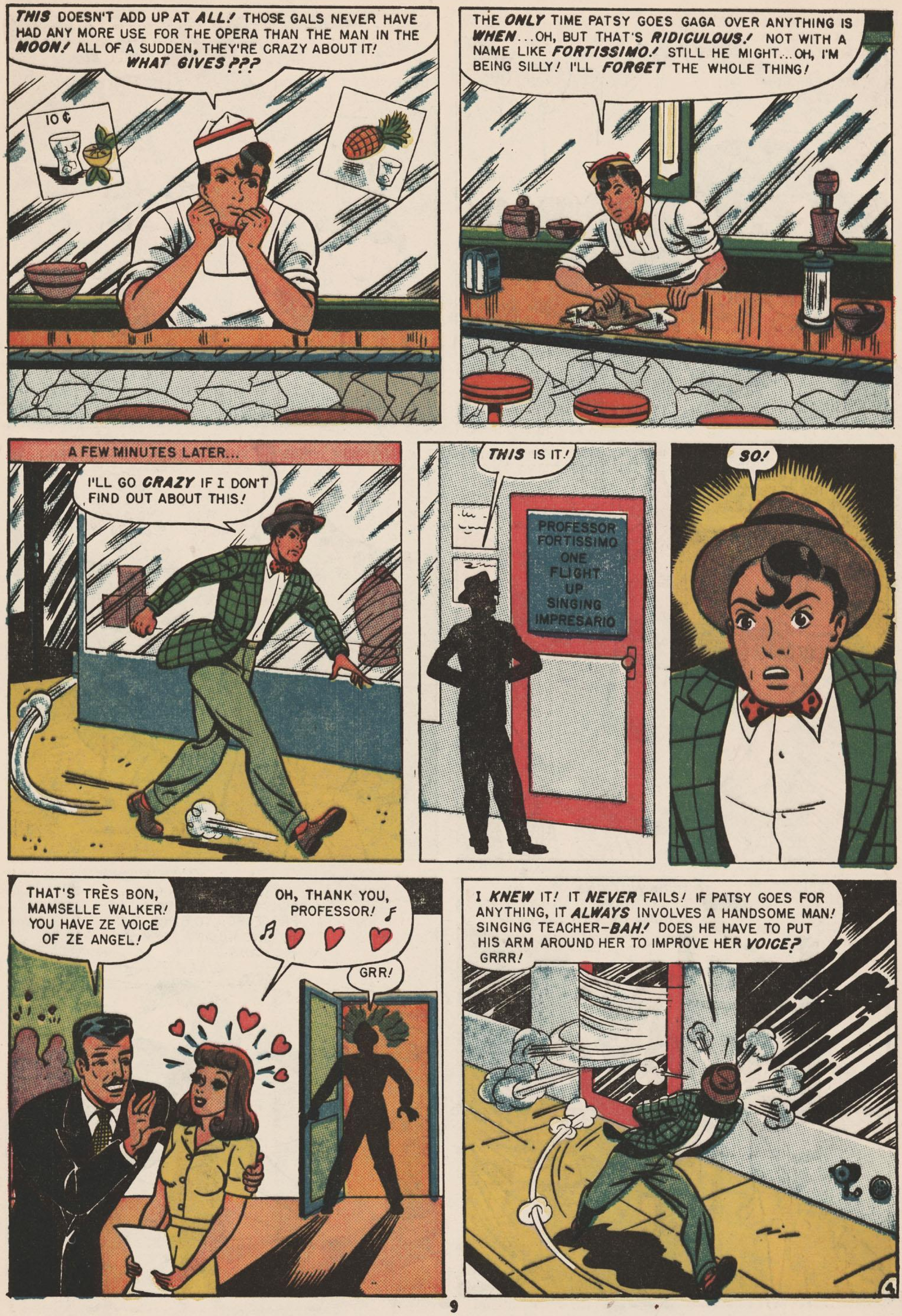
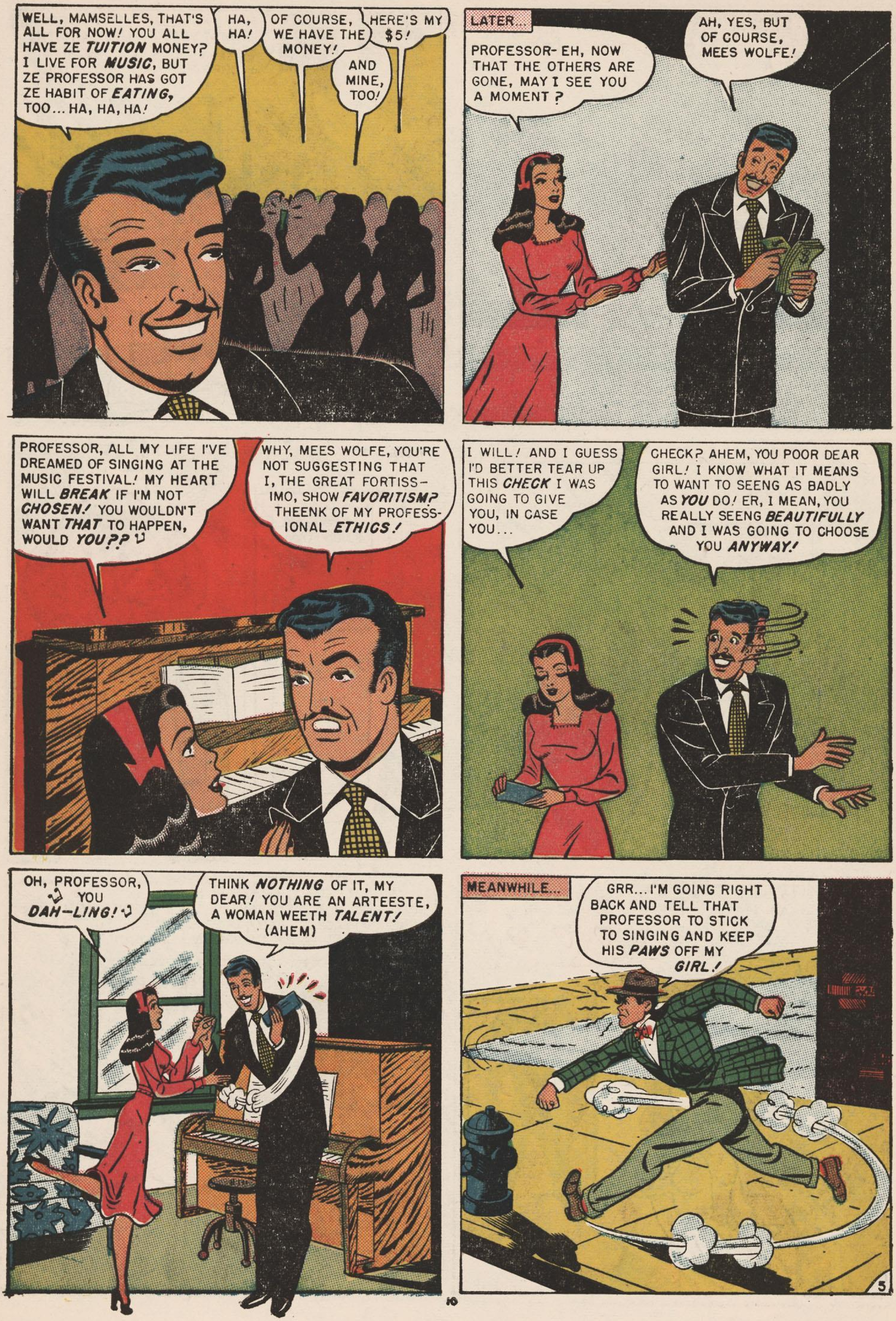
PATSY WALKER

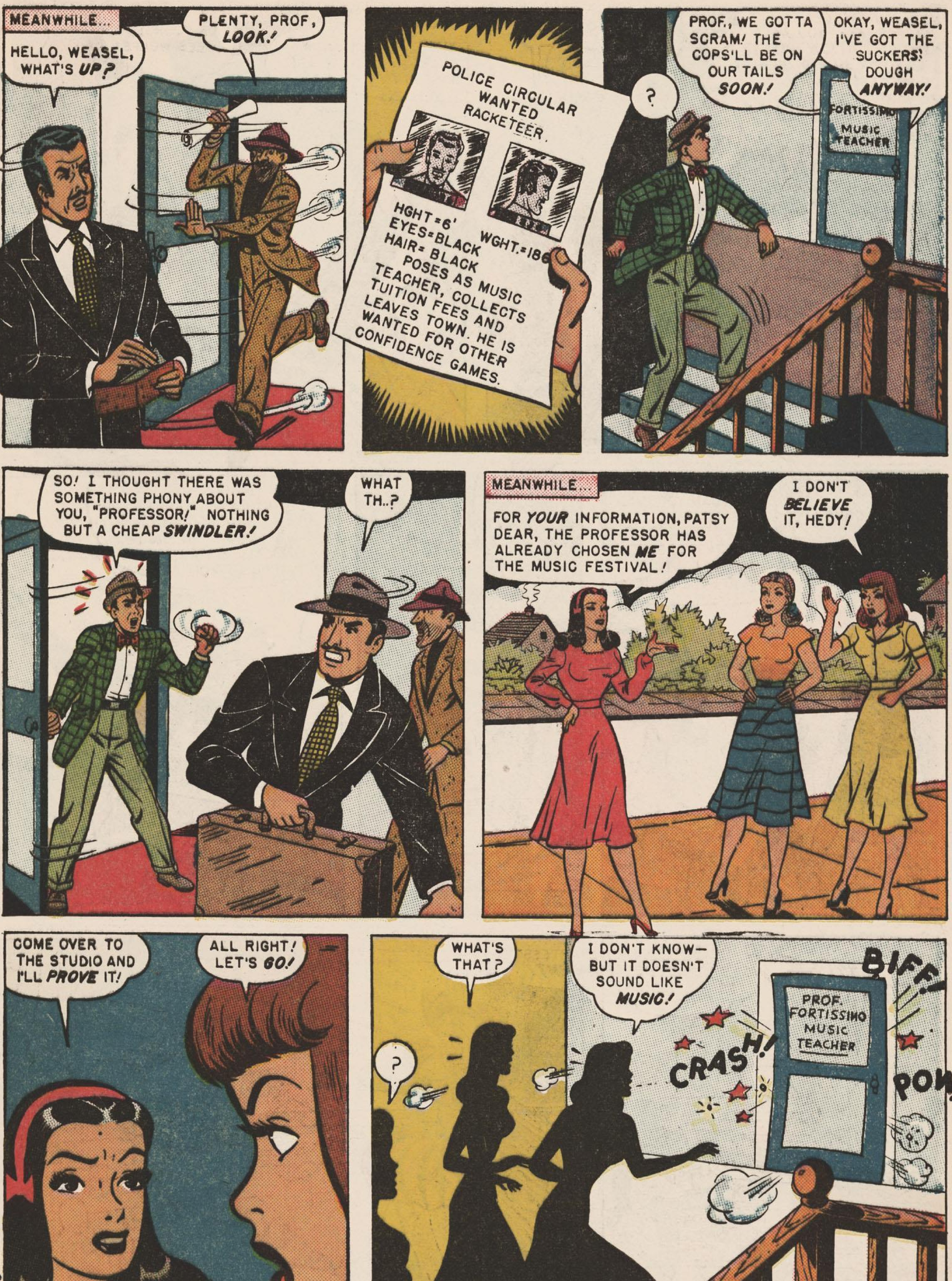

OH, GENTLEMEN! YOU'VE COME TO HEAR ME *SING*!
LATER, LADY! FIRST WE'RE LOOKING FOR THE CORPSE THAT LET OUT THE BLOOD CURDLING *SCREAM* WE HEARD!
"MUSIC HATH CHARMS!"
3003
MOTHER, DEAR, *CULTURE* IS A *WONDERFUL* THING, ISN'T IT? I MEAN, A PERSON SHOULD SHOW AN *ACTIVE* INTEREST IN THE *ARTS*, SHOULDN'T ONE?
OF COURSE, DEAR!
THINGS LIKE LITERATURE, ART, AND *MUSIC* ARE JUST SIMPLY *MUSTS* ON ANY INTELLIGENT PERSON'S LIST!
1


MOTHER, DEAR, I'VE BEEN THINKING THAT I WOULD LIKE TO STUDY **OPERA!** I'VE JUST HAD MY HEART SET ON THAT **ALL** MY **LIFE!** ♪ O SOLO MIO ♪
OH, YES, **THAT** AMONG **OTHER** THINGS! BUT ANYWAY, I THINK IT'S A GOOD IDEA!
OH, MOM, YOU'RE A **DARLING!** AND WITH THE **FIVE DOLLARS** YOU'RE GOING TO GIVE ME FOR LESSONS, I'M **SURE** PROFESSOR FORTISSIMO WILL MAKE A **STAR** OF ME IN NO TIME!
FIVE DOLLARS! BUT, PATSY, I **DIDN'T** SAY I'D...
OH, YOU DON'T WANT ME TO BE A SUCCESS! I SUPPOSE YOU'D PREFER THAT I WORK AS A **DRUDGE** ALL MY LIFE! OH, WELL! I'LL BE **BRAVE** AND FACE MY BITTER DISAPPOINTMENT WITH A **SMILE!** (SIGH-H-H-H)
!
AFTER THAT SWAN SONG, I RATHER THINK YOU'D DO BETTER IN **DRAMATIC SCHOOL!** HERE'S THE FIVE, DOLLARS, AND.. **OH!**
OH, MOTHER! I **KNEW** YOU WOULDN'T LET ME DOWN! YOU'RE AN **ANGEL!** UMMMM
THERE'S ONLY ONE REASON WHY PATSY EVER WANTS TO BE SOMETHING OR OTHER! I I WONDER IF... HMM... WHAT'S THIS? PATSY LEFT IT HERE!
WELL, **THIS** EXPLAINS IT! A CIRCULAR WITH THE PROFESSOR'S **PICTURE** ON IT!
2

HI, NANCY! I'VE GOT THE $5! HOW DID *YOU* MAKE OUT?
IT TOOK SOME FAST TALKING, BUT I GOT IT, TOO!
IMAGINE STUDYING WITH PROFESSOR FORTISSIMO! OH, AREN'T YOU THRILLED *PINK!*
YOU BET I AM! LET'S GO IN AND TELL *BUZZ!*
YOU'RE GOING TO STUDY *OPERA?* SAY, WHAT GIVES? TWO OF THE HEPPEST CHICKS IN TOWN TURNING *LONG HAIR!*
MR. BAXTER, IT IS QUITE *OBVIOUS* THAT YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF CULTURAL MATTER ENDS WITH THE LOWLY BOOGIE-WOOGIE!
OPERA IS THE FINEST MUSIC THERE *IS!* PROFESSOR FORTISSIMO IS A MAN OF GREAT MUSICAL BACKGROUND! HE WILL MAKE GREAT *SINGERS* OF NANCY AND ME!
PROFESSOR FORTISSIMO? HA, WHAT A *CREEP*—PROBABLY!
HAH! THAT'S WHAT *YOU* THINK! DON'T FORGET, *I'M* THE ONLY *REAL TALENT* IN THE CLASS!
HEDY! SO *YOU'RE* IN THE CLASS, TOO! WELL, WE'LL FIND OUT WHO THE *TALENTED* ONE IS WHEN WE SEE *WHO* GETS CHOSEN FOR THE *MUSIC FESTIVAL!*
AND *THAT* WILL BE NONE OTHER THAN *ME!*
HAH! COME, NANCY, THE AIR IN HERE IS NOT SOOTHING TO OUR *DELICATE THROATS!*
3

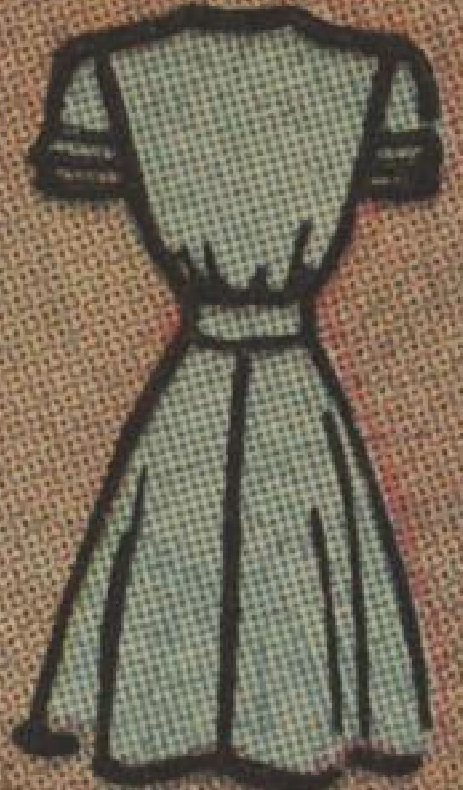

THIS DOESN'T ADD UP AT ALL! THOSE GALS NEVER HAVE HAD ANY MORE USE FOR THE OPERA THAN THE MAN IN THE MOON! ALL OF A SUDDEN, THEY'RE CRAZY ABOUT IT! WHAT GIVES???
10¢
THE ONLY TIME PATSY GOES GAGA OVER ANYTHING IS WHEN...OH, BUT THAT'S RIDICULOUS! NOT WITH A NAME LIKE FORTISSIMO! STILL HE MIGHT...OH, I'M BEING SILLY! I'LL FORGET THE WHOLE THING!
A FEW MINUTES LATER...
I'LL GO CRAZY IF I DON'T FIND OUT ABOUT THIS!
THIS IS IT!
PROFESSOR FORTISSIMO ONE FLIGHT UP SINGING IMPRESARIO
SO!
THAT'S TRÈS BON, MAMSELLE WALKER! YOU HAVE ZE VOICE OF ZE ANGEL!
OH, THANK YOU, PROFESSOR!
GRR!
I KNEW IT! IT NEVER FAILS! IF PATSY GOES FOR ANYTHING, IT ALWAYS INVOLVES A HANDSOME MAN! SINGING TEACHER—BAH! DOES HE HAVE TO PUT HIS ARM AROUND HER TO IMPROVE HER VOICE? GRRR!

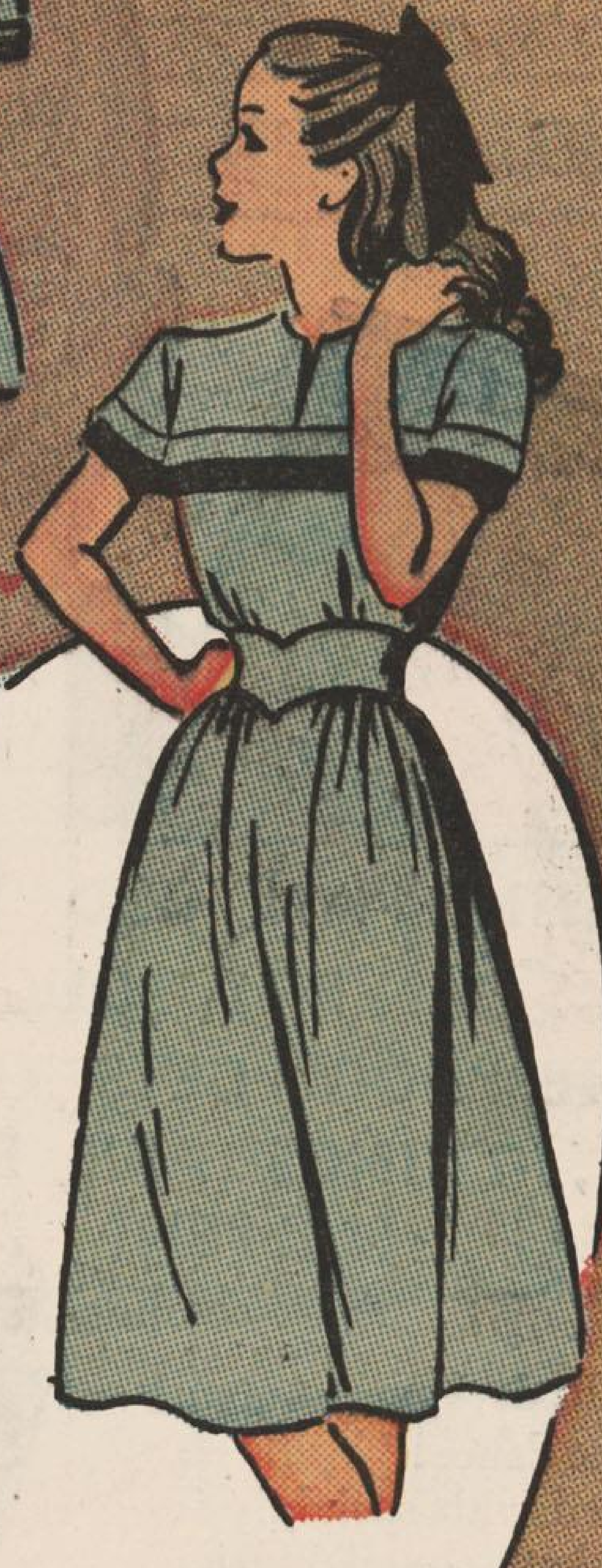

WELL, MAMSELLES, THAT'S ALL FOR NOW! YOU ALL HAVE ZE *TUITION* MONEY? I LIVE FOR *MUSIC*, BUT ZE PROFESSOR HAS GOT ZE HABIT OF *EATING*, TOO... HA, HA, HA!
HA, HA!
OF COURSE, WE HAVE THE MONEY!
HERE'S MY $5!
AND MINE, TOO!
LATER...
PROFESSOR- EH, NOW THAT THE OTHERS ARE GONE, MAY I SEE YOU A MOMENT ?
AH, YES, BUT OF COURSE, MEES WOLFE!
PROFESSOR, ALL MY LIFE I'VE DREAMED OF SINGING AT THE MUSIC FESTIVAL! MY HEART WILL *BREAK* IF I'M NOT *CHOSEN!* YOU WOULDN'T WANT *THAT* TO HAPPEN, WOULD *YOU??* ♪
WHY, MEES WOLFE, YOU'RE NOT SUGGESTING THAT I, THE GREAT FORTISSIMO, SHOW *FAVORITISM?* THEENK OF MY PROFESSIONAL *ETHICS!*
I WILL! AND I GUESS I'D BETTER TEAR UP THIS *CHECK* I WAS GOING TO GIVE YOU, IN CASE YOU...
CHECK? AHEM, YOU POOR DEAR GIRL! I KNOW WHAT IT MEANS TO WANT TO SEENG AS BADLY AS *YOU* DO! ER, I MEAN, YOU REALLY SEENG *BEAUTIFULLY* AND I WAS GOING TO CHOOSE YOU *ANYWAY!*
OH, PROFESSOR, ♪ YOU *DAH-LING!* ♪
THINK *NOTHING* OF IT, MY DEAR! YOU ARE AN ARTEESTE, A WOMAN WEETH *TALENT!* (AHEM)
MEANWHILE...
GRR... I'M GOING RIGHT BACK AND TELL THAT PROFESSOR TO STICK TO SINGING AND KEEP HIS *PAWS* OFF MY *GIRL!*
5


MEANWHILE...
HELLO, WEASEL, WHAT'S *UP?*
PLENTY, PROF, *LOOK!*
POLICE CIRCULAR
WANTED
RACKETEER.
HGHT=6' WGHT.=186
EYES=BLACK
HAIR=BLACK
POSES AS MUSIC TEACHER, COLLECTS TUITION FEES AND LEAVES TOWN. HE IS WANTED FOR OTHER CONFIDENCE GAMES.
?
PROF., WE GOTTA SCRAM! THE COPS'LL BE ON OUR TAILS *SOON!*
OKAY, WEASEL, I'VE GOT THE SUCKERS' DOUGH *ANYWAY!*
FORTISSIMO MUSIC TEACHER
SO! I THOUGHT THERE WAS SOMETHING PHONY ABOUT YOU, "PROFESSOR!" NOTHING BUT A CHEAP *SWINDLER!*
WHAT TH..?
MEANWHILE...
FOR *YOUR* INFORMATION, PATSY DEAR, THE PROFESSOR HAS ALREADY CHOSEN *ME* FOR THE MUSIC FESTIVAL!
I DON'T *BELIEVE* IT, HEDY!
COME OVER TO THE STUDIO AND I'LL *PROVE* IT!
ALL RIGHT! LET'S *GO!*
WHAT'S THAT?
I DON'T KNOW— BUT IT DOESN'T SOUND LIKE *MUSIC!*
?
PROF. FORTISSIMO MUSIC TEACHER
BIFF!
CRASH!
POW!

ALL RIGHT, PROFESSOR— SING!!
?
?
?
OKAY! OKAY! TAKE IT EASY, KID! I'LL GIVE THE DOUGH BACK! EVEN THE BRIBE THAT WOLFE GIRL GAVE ME TO PICK HER FOR THE FESTIVAL!
BRIBE, EH!
BUZZ!
OHHHH!
LATER...
WELL, IT LOOKS LIKE NO ONE GOES TO THE MUSIC FESTIVAL!
AW, YOU'RE BETTER OFF! CAN YOU IMAGINE ANYTHING AS SILLY AS GETTING UP ON A STAGE IN SOME FUNNY COSTUME AND SCREAMING...
FIGAR--R--RO
FIGARO
FIGARO
FIGARO FEE
FIGARO FOO
FIGARO FA
TINKLE!
MAGNIFIQUE! SUPERBE! ATTA LAST I FIND HEEM! ANOTHER CARUSO! OH, I KEES BOTH YOUR CHEECKS! MY WANDERFUL GENIUS!
?
HEY! WHAT GIVES? HEY!
NOT A MOMENT TO LOSE! ON TO THE OPERA HOUSE!
LATER, BELIEVE IT OR NOT...
FIGARO
FIGARO
FIGARO
FIGARO
WHAT WAS HE SAYING ABOUT GETTING ON A STAGE IN A FUNNY COSTUME AND SCREAMING? HAH!
DITTO! HAH!
7
THE END

STITCHIN' TIME





9468
SIZES
10 - 16

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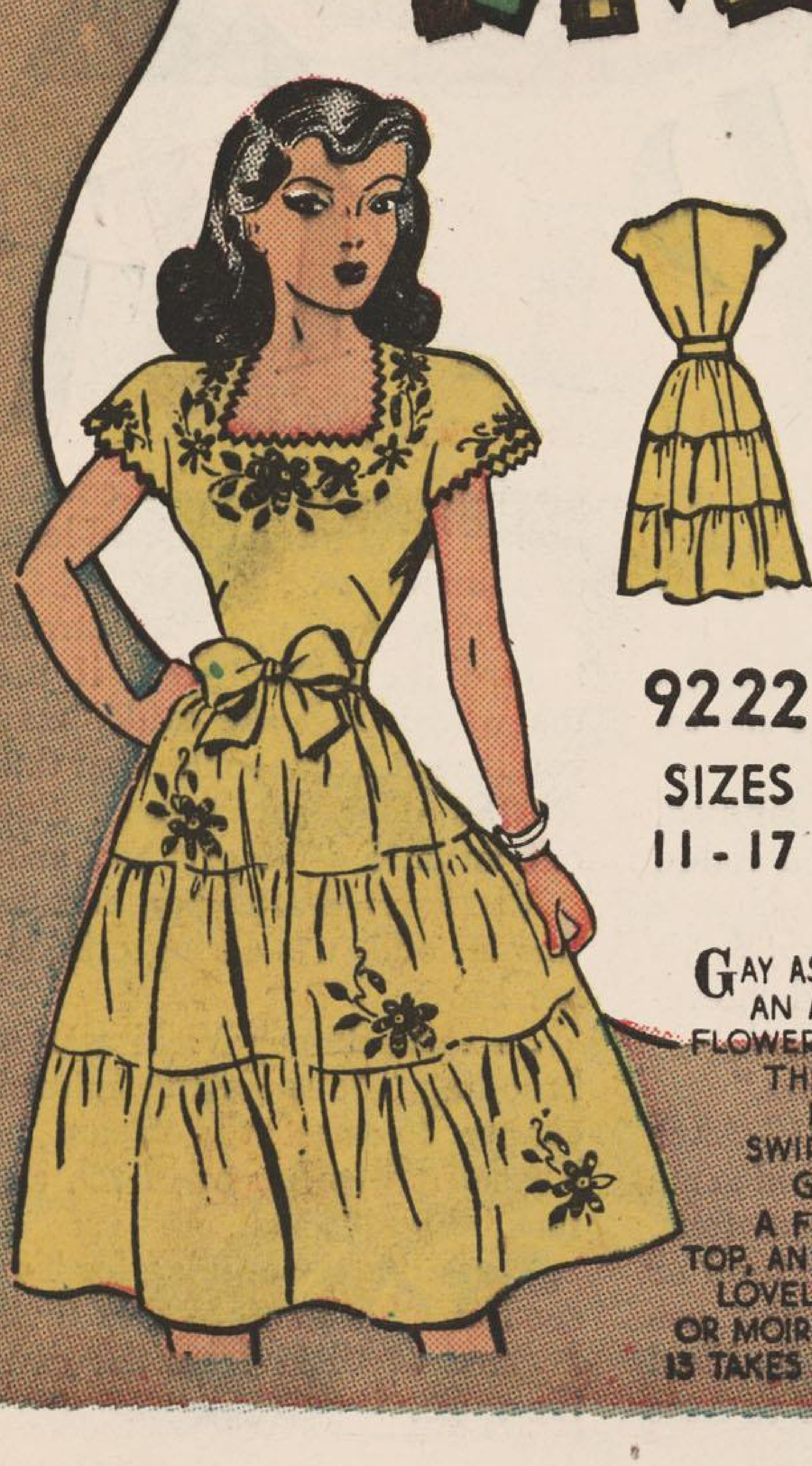

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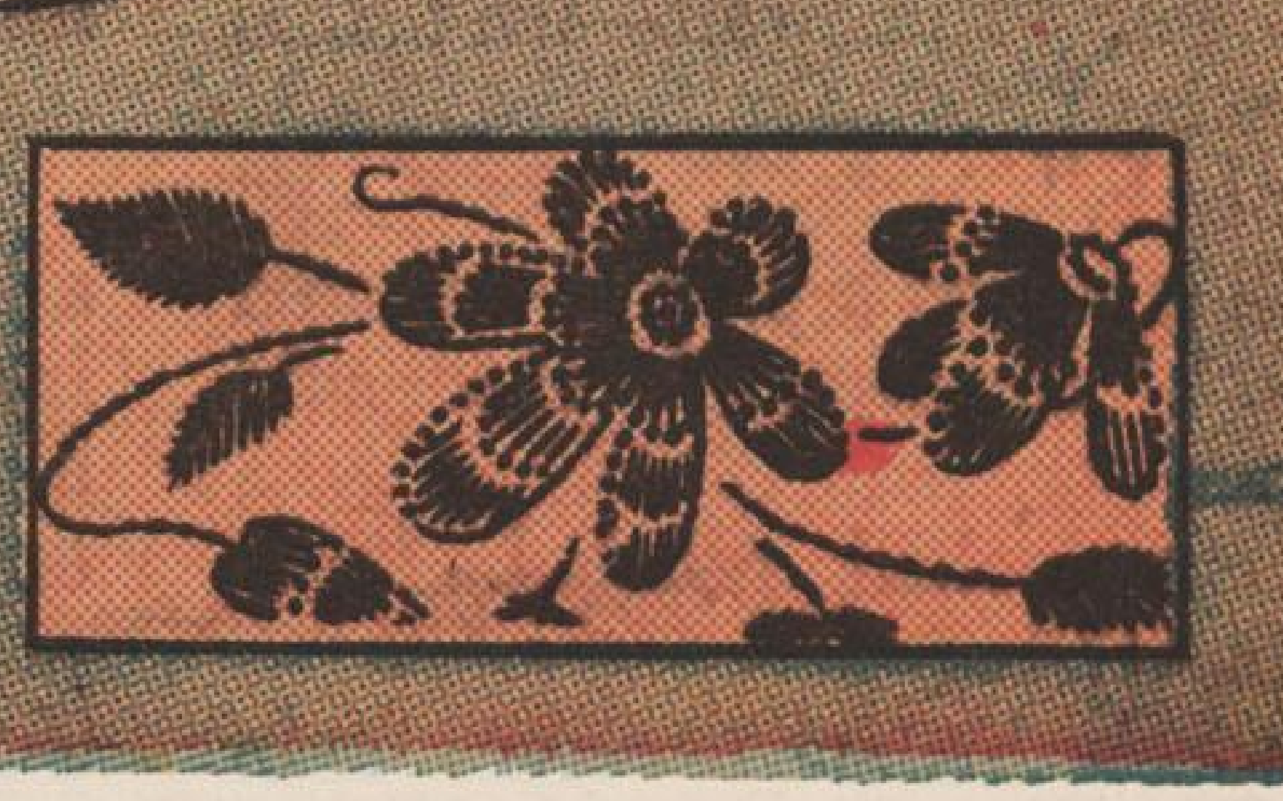
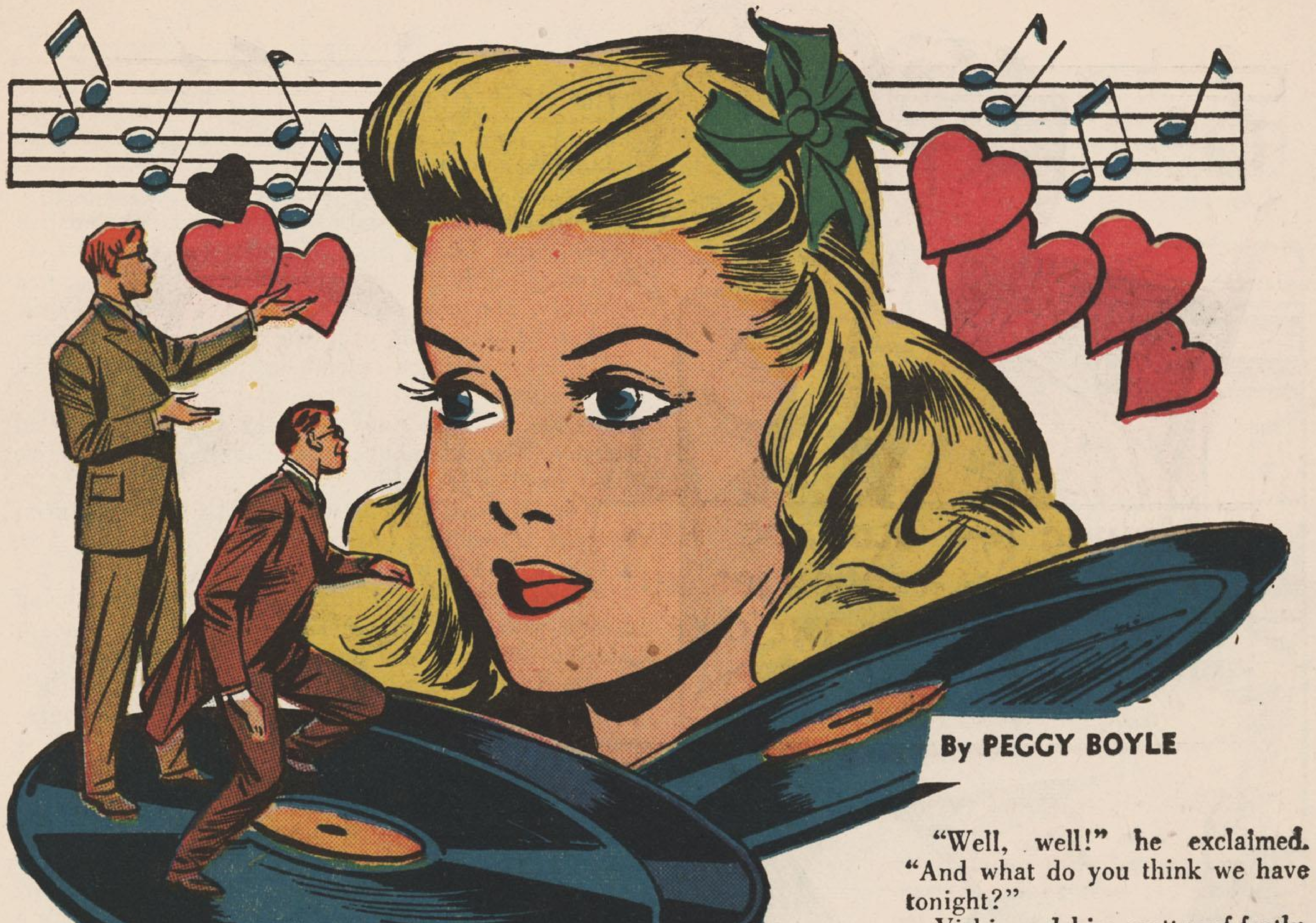


TEACHING AN OLD DOG NEW TRICKS CAN BE A TOUGH JOB. BUT IF THE "DOG" GETS THE IDEA—WELL, THINGS ARE BOUND TO HAPPEN!



A PLATTER MATTER

By PEGGY BOYLE

"HE'S tall, dark, and—umm! can he dance!"

Vicki listened with sprightly interest as her best chum, Marian, described the cousin who had descended on her household for a week's visit. "Sounds cute," she agreed. "What's his name?"

"Keene. Keene Wilson. And the name really suits him." Marian giggled. "You know," she confessed, "sometimes I'm almost sorry he's my cousin."

Vicki nodded understandingly. "From your description," she said, "I don't blame you." She looked speculatively into the mantel mirror. The image of a pert, snub-nosed girl of sixteen with soft flaxen hair and large dreamy eyes stared approvingly back.

"Why don't you," Marion's voice was keyed to a confidential pitch, "why don't you come over tonight and—uh—get introduced?"

The large, soft eyes lit up. "Why, I'd love to!" Vicki chirped. Then the faintest touch of a frown crept into them. "But wait—isn't this Wednesday?"

"Uh-huh."

Vicki snapped a pair of dejected fingers. "Townsend," she said briefly.

Marian looked puzzled. "The weak bleat?"

"Townsend always comes over Wednesday evenings," Vicki reminded her. "Plays records and talks classical music at me for hours."

Marian sighed sympathetically. "Couldn't you postpone it till tomorrow night?"

Vicki's laugh was not amused. "When Townsend forms a habit, the Supreme Court couldn't change it. He's in the habit of playing his records here on Wednesday evenings so . . ." She shrugged.

"You could stand him up."

"Oh, I couldn't do that!" After all, Vicki reflected, Townsend came in handy on a million occasions, always willing to run an errand or escort her places. That was important. Then, too, she really liked Townsend and would hate to hurt his feelings. If only he could be broken of that music-and-lecture combination . . .

Marian got up, was strolling toward the door. "Well, if that's the way it is," she said, "maybe you'll meet Keene some other time." At the door she turned. "Send out an SOS if it gets too grim."

Vicki stared after her, and there was an odd, wondering crinkle in her brow.

. . . At dinner Vicki was still brooding about having missed a chance to meet the dream boy, Keene. It was her usual too awful luck, she reflected.

"Isn't this the evening for Townsend and his music?" Her mother beamed at Vicki from the end of the table.

"Yes." Vicki's voice was morose.

"Then," her mother smiled gently, "I think I shall retire early, put cotton in my ears, and get a good night's sleep."

"Why, Mom, do Townsend's records disturb you?"

"Well, I'm sure they're very beautiful. But, dear, don't his talks tire *you* a bit at times, too?"

Vicki grinned. "You can say that again!"

. . . Vicki waited for the French clock on the whatnot to tinkle its news of seven-thirty. Just as it did, there were three sharp, measured peals on the doorbell. Absently fluffing back the hair from her shoulders, Vicki wondered when, if ever, Townsend would be a minute early—or late! It just wasn't human to be so invariably precise. But then, she reflected, Townsend often gave the impression that he wasn't quite human.

With an automatic glimpse at the mirror, Vicki opened the door. A youth of seventeen stood there, carefully clutching a bundle under his arm. He might have been good-looking if it weren't for the heavy-rimmed glasses perched on his nose, through which he goggled owlishly. His hair was red and tangled, the tail of his sport jacket flapped in the breeze, and a fiercely concentrated, out-of-this-world air clung to him. Rushing into the room, he deposited the package with gentle care on the radio-phonograph, then turned to Vicki, rubbing his hands gleefully.

"Well, well!" he exclaimed. "And what do you think we have tonight?"

Vicki eyed him matter-of-factly. "Give me one guess. Records?"

"Yep!" His voice was filled with eager delight. "Included among which," he paused impressively, "is a Debussy nocturne!"

"Not really?" Vicki made an effort to sound enthusiastic.

"And also—but wait till you hear this!" Townsend undid the bundle, slapped a platter on the phonograph, and held up a listening finger. "Recognize it?"

"A funeral dirge?" Vicki suggested.

"No, no." Townsend's voice was gently reproving. "A prelude. The prelude to—oh, it'll come to you."

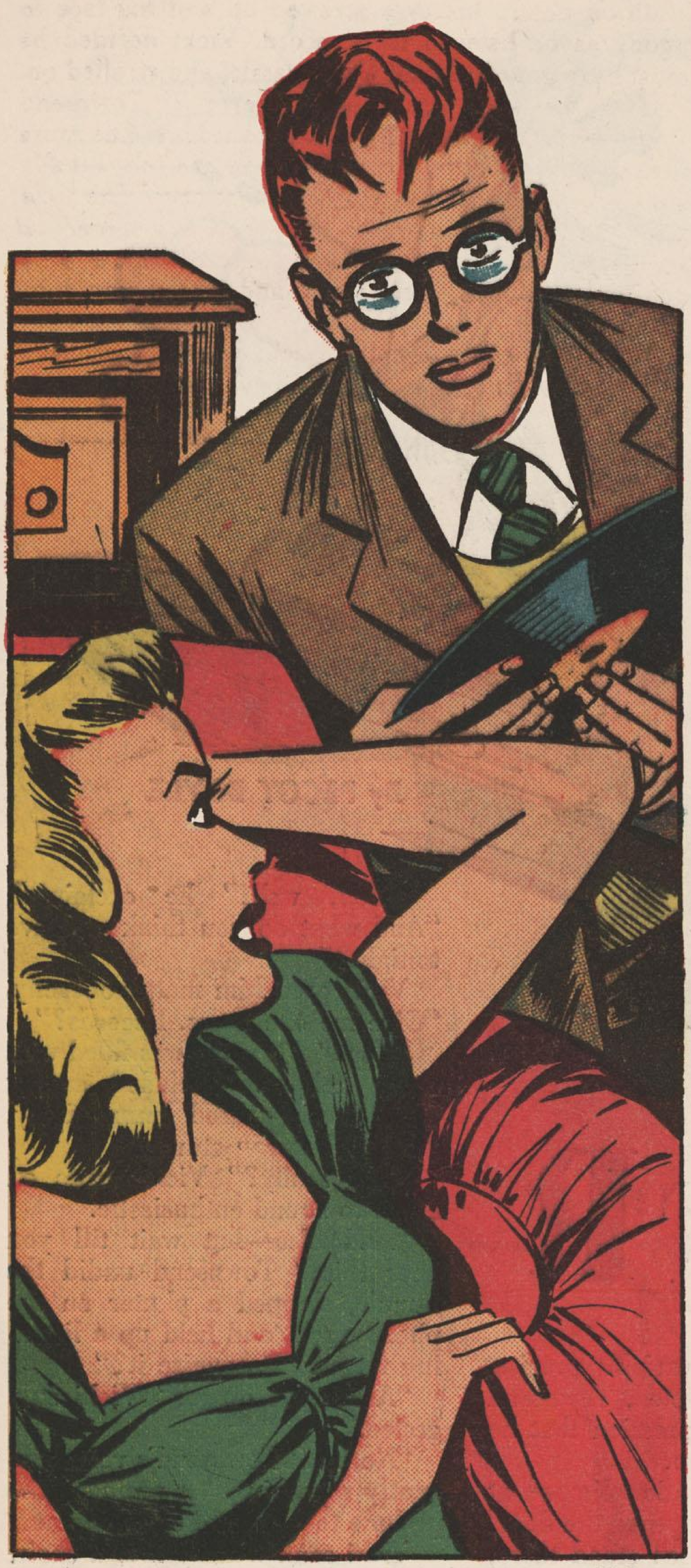
Vicki sank wearily into a chair. Townsend bounced about the room, absorbed with an inner delight, till the record ground out its final note. "Now what shall it be?" he demanded. "The first act of——."

"I have some nifty Larry Crane records in the case," Vicki announced, bravely hopeful.

Townsend blinked. "What did you say?"

Vicki slowly repeated, "Larry Crane. You've heard of him—or haven't you? Plays the—."

"I have no wish to make his



"Well, well!" he exclaimed. "And what do you think we have tonight?"

acquaintance," Townsend interrupted coldly. He drew himself up to his full five feet four. "Really, Vicki, I can't understand your liking such vulgar attempts at music. Jazz! Hmph!"

Vicki settled back into her chair. She should have known better, of course, than to suggest popular music to such a lover of the classics as Townsend. But if he would only give Larry Crane a chance, she was sure . . .

"Suppose we play a bit of the first act of *Aida*," Townsend continued. "It's one of my favorites. Are you acquainted with the story of that opera?"

Vicki ground her teeth. Here it was again—Townsend's lecture on grand opera. A little Beethoven she could stand, a touch of Shubert, a pinch of Mozart, quite a lot of Chopin. But when Townsend swung into opera—well! Vicki decided a rebellion was definitely in order.

Townsend chose that moment to reverse a record, and an idea popped into Vicki's head. Marian had said, "Send out an SOS if it gets too grim." Well, it was certainly gretting grim enough! Perhaps, just possibly, she could catch Marian at home. While Townsend was bent over the phonograph, rattling off a dozen words a second on the glories of opera, Vicki slipped out of the room.

In the hall she picked up the phone and dialed quietly. Marian's chuckle came over the line. "I've been waiting for this!"

"Oh, Marian," Vicki wailed, "it's not only grim tonight, it's getting positively—well, gruesome! Can I help it if I'm a musical illiterate?"

"Take it easy, kid. I'll be right over, and I'll bring Keene with me." Before she hung up, Vicki heard Marian shout, "Come on, Keene. To the rescue!"

. . . Ten minutes later the ringing of the doorbell interrupted Townsend in the midst of a discourse on the life of Verdi. He looked startled.

"That's probably Marian," Vicki observed innocently. "She said something about coming over."

"Good, good!" Townsend rubbed his hands. "She'll be just in time to hear the second act."

It *was* Marian, and, when Vicki opened the door, a tall, crisply black-haired boy trooped in behind her.

"This," Marian gestured, "is Keene!"

"Howdy, folks." Keene grinned confidently, exhibiting a pearly set of teeth set in a tanned, handsome face. "Reckon this party needs a little life." He tossed his hat toward Vicki, held out a large hand to shake Townsend's, who winced at the pressure, then collapsed into an overstuffed chair. In a moment he was up again, comically holding his ears.

"Yep, it sure does!" he continued. "That long-haired music always gives me the grave digger blues. Let's get the joint unlimbered, huh?" He moved toward the phonograph.

Townsend had been staring in silent amazement. Now, as Keene's hand reached for the needle, he stepped forward.

"Just a minute," he objected. "We're listening to that, Vicki and I. It's the second act of——."

"Of the Big Apple of 1870. I know. But it's dead—dead and buried. Now let's see what we have here." Keene grinned irreverently and stooped to examine Vicki's case of records. "Ah! Larry Crane. C'mon, folks, let's set the roof to rockin'!"

Pleadingly, Townsend turned to Vicki. "Didn't you want to hear the records I brought?"

"Well . . ." Vicki hesitated. She didn't want to hurt Townsend's feelings. "I wouldn't mind one or two popular numbers."

Keene was removing Townsend's record from the phonograph. He caught Marian's eye, grinned, and let the record drop to the floor. As it shattered into a dozen fragments, he exclaimed, softly apologetic, "Well, now, isn't that too bad? But you didn't want that anyway, did you, Townsend? Come around tomorrow, and I'll give you a boogie woogie platter that'll make your ears flap!"

Vicki had never seen Townsend look so woebegone. She frowned. Keene was going too far. Fun was fun, of course, but . . .

"You've just ruined my whole album, that's all," Townsend mourned. He regarded the shattered disc sadly, then moved over to a corner and sat down, his face glum.

"This'll cheer you up," Keene said briskly. He put on a record he'd chosen, then grabbed Vicki and broke into a polka.

"Let's dance, Townsend," Marian suggested.

Townsend looked up, embarrassed. "I don't dance," he confessed. He wrung a pair of awkward thumbs together and wondered what had happened to his evening of beautiful music.

An hour and a dozen records later Townsend got up. He'd silently gritted his teeth down to the gums, and his head was aching from the uninhibited banging of a drum solo. "Have to go now," he mumbled, turning to Vicki.

Vicki felt a pang of guilt. She'd let Townsend in for an awful evening, one he wouldn't soon forget. But after all, she argued, he'd been boring her with his operas for a long, long time. And then too, she thought hopefully, it might do Townsend some good.

"Don't run off," she said. "I'll make some chocolate milk."

Townsend brightened at that—but there was Keene, bearing down on him with hat and coat. "Have to leave, huh?" Keene exclaimed jovially, jamming the hat down over Townsend's eyes. He propelled him firmly toward the door. "Well, well. Be sure to hurry back—next year some time!"

Townsend turned bewilderedly to wave at Vicki just as the door slammed in his face. He stared at it a moment, then scowled, turned on his heel, and stamped away.

Inside the door Keene folded his arms and smiled self-approvingly. "Well, I guess I took care of *that* pest for you, Vicki," he boomed.

Vicki stared at him, speechless. He stood there, tall, handsome, smugly sure of himself, and all at once Vicki knew she hated him.

"How . . . how dare you," she gasped, "treat a guest of mine like that?"

Keene shrugged happily. "No trouble at all," he smiled. "You wanted to get rid of him, didn't you?"

"Yes.—No! . . . At least you didn't have to be rude." She burst into tears.

"Oh, now, Vicki . . ."

"Why don't you go home?" Vicki covered her face with her hands and rushed out of the room.

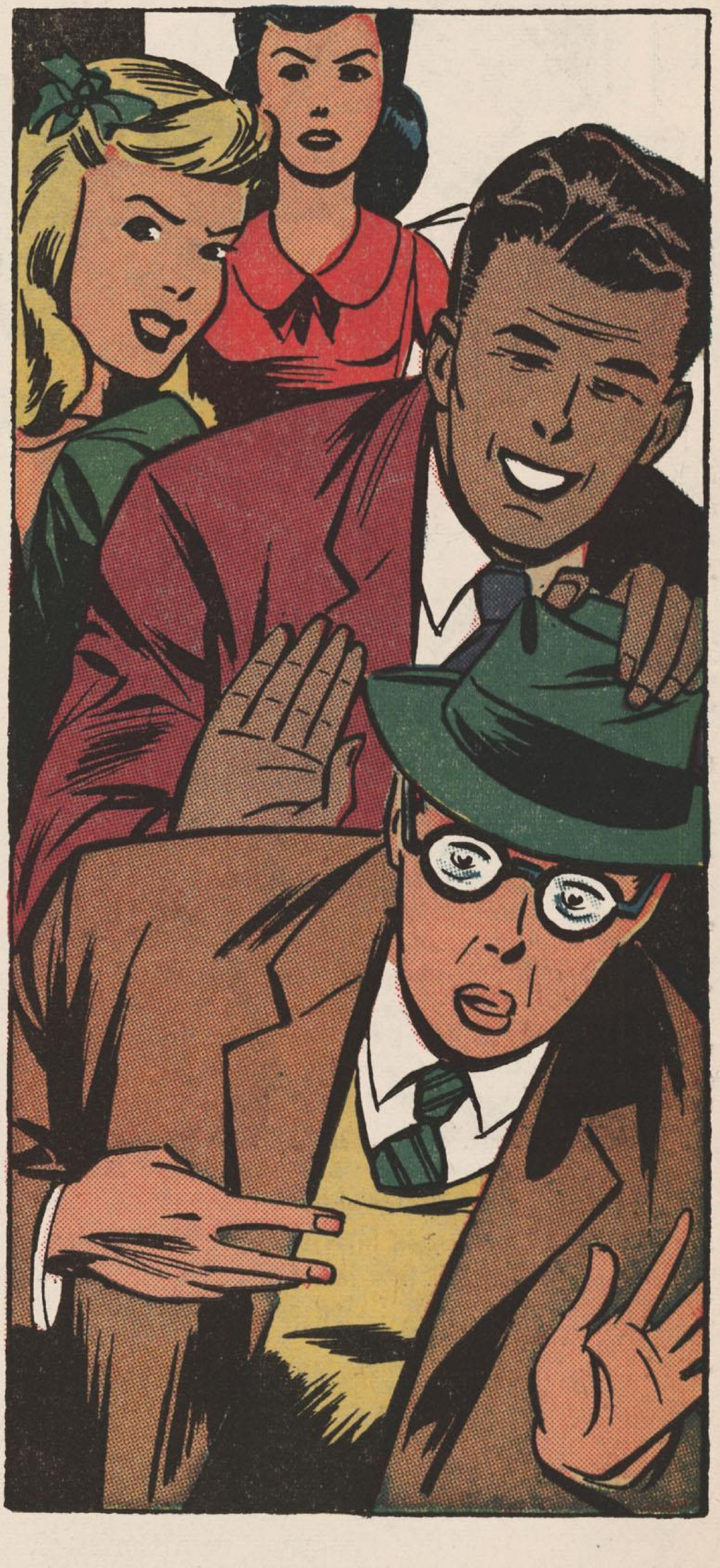
Keene stared at Marian, then turned to search for his coat. "You know," he said, his voice honestly puzzled, "I think Vicki really likes that long-haired square!"

Marian smiled. "You men are so subtle," she murmured.

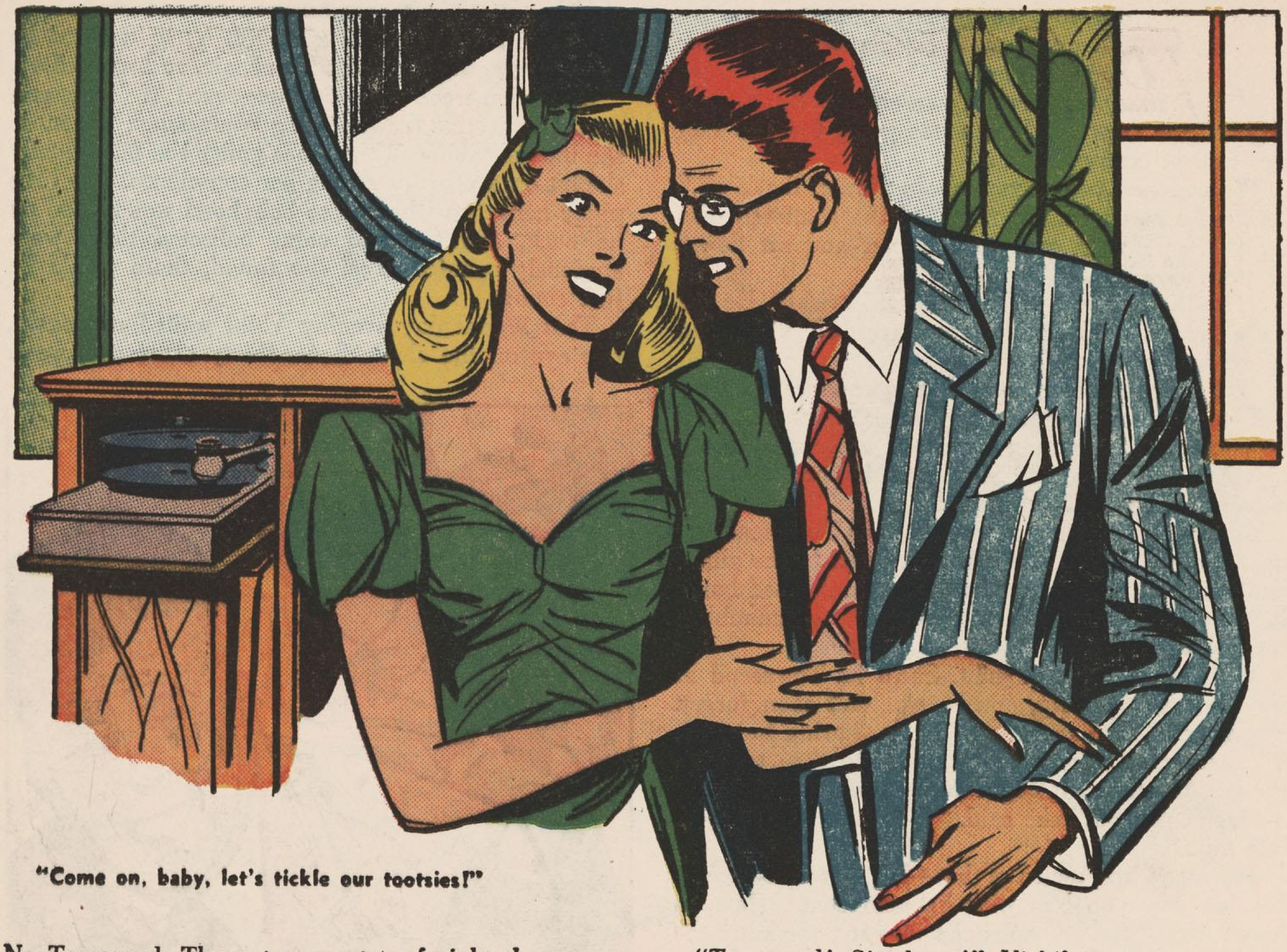
. . . The following Saturday Vicki happened to pass the Raucous Record Shoppe. Glancing through the window, she spotted Townsend caged in a little audition booth, his eyes screwed up and his face in agony as he listened to a record. Vicki decided he must have gotten hold of a flat classic, and strolled on.

Over the week end she wondered if Townsend would be around the following Wednesday. The more she thought about it, the more guilty she felt. Finally she hit on a plan for easing her conscience. The little piggy bank she'd had since babyhood was turned on its back, and the odd coins collected there were anxiously counted. Yes, she found, there would be just enough!

That Wednesday evening Vicki waited anxiously, one eye on the clock. Seven-thirty came and went.



"Have to leave, huh?" Keene exclaimed jovially, jamming the hat down over Townsend's eyes.



"Come on, baby, let's tickle our tootsies!"

No Townsend. Then at a quarter of eight there was a series of discordant screams from the doorbell. It couldn't be Townsend. He'd never been late in his life. Besides, it wasn't his ring.

But it *was* Townsend! Or at least traces of the old Townsend could be vaguely discerned in the young man who pranced into the front room. Not many, to be sure, but if you had known Townsend for some years, you could still recognize him.

"Howdee, gate! How do I rate?" he snapped, assuming a pose.

Vicki stared, batted her eyelids, and stared again. The apparition before her was clad in a chalk-striped coat, immensely wide at the shoulders and hanging to his knees. A scarlet bow tie flapped at his neck, and his hand was swinging a three-foot chain disguised as a watch fob. His usually shaggy mop of hair was slicked against his scalp with brilliantine, and a huge gob of gum puffed out one cheek.

"What say, Bo Peep! Still think I'm a creep?" he challenged. He turned to the phonograph, slapped on a platter he'd brought, and grabbed Vicki as she was sinking weakly into a chair. "Come on, baby, let's tickle our tootsies!"

In tempo with the nerve-jangling music, he swung her into a jitterbug dance so wild and woolly Vicki was sure she heard bones snap. Struggling out of his grasp finally, she gasped breathlessly, "Townsend! What's come over you?"

He grinned, crackling his gum. "Been converted, Kate! Just love that hot music now!"

"Townsend! Sit down!" Vicki's voice was commanding.

Abruptly, Townsend wilted. "What's the matter?" he asked plaintively. "Didn't I look realistic?"

"Answering that would only lead to bloodshed," Vicki pointed out. "But honestly, Townsend, from now on you'd better stick to the classics. They . . . they fit your personality better."

Townsend shook his head despondently, "I thought you'd begin to like me again if I changed into a . . . a zoot-suiter," he mumbled. He walked toward the door.

"Townsend, you're really human!" Vicki marveled. "But of course I like you. Wait—where're you going?"

Townsend brightened. "You mean you want me to stick around?"

"At least," Vicki produced a package wrapped with blue silk ribbon, "tell me what you think of this."

Townsend tore open the package. "Grieg's *Piano Concerto*!" he whistled. "Hey, you mean . . .?" He gestured toward the phonograph.

Vicki nodded. "But first," she held up a finger, "promise me one thing."

"Sure." Townsend's eyes were almost misty.

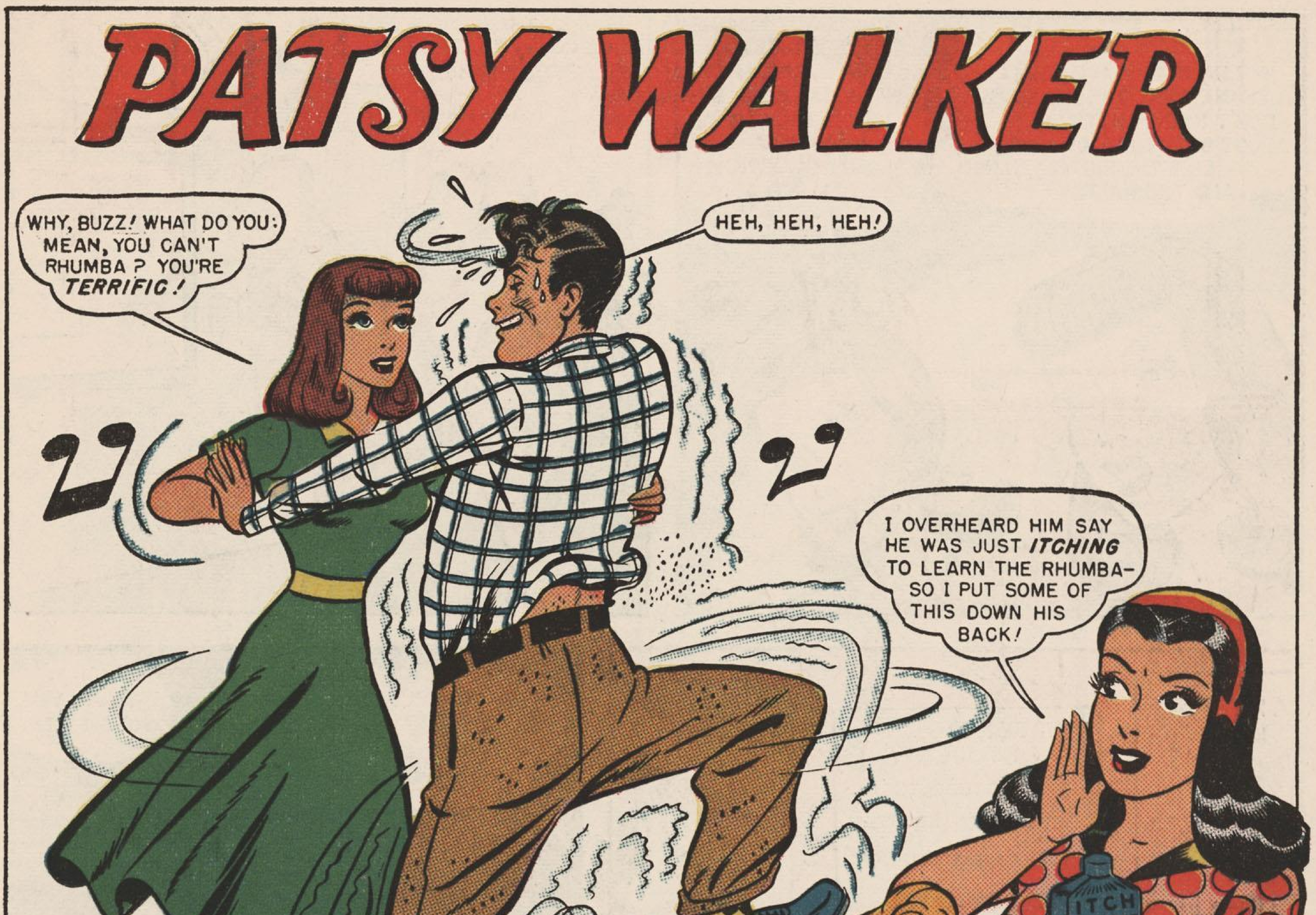
"Don't *ever* lecture me on opera again!"

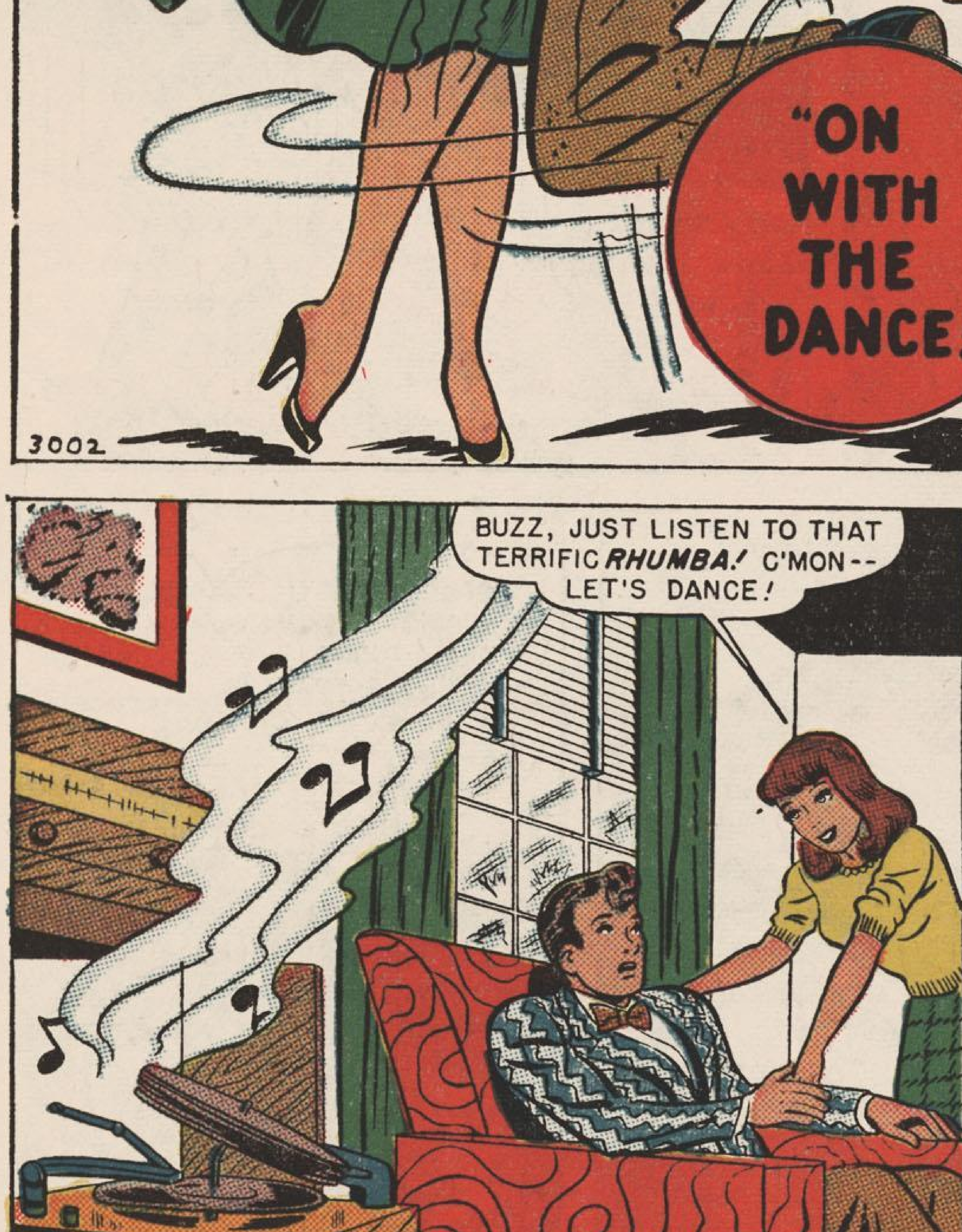
"Anything you say," Townsend promised.

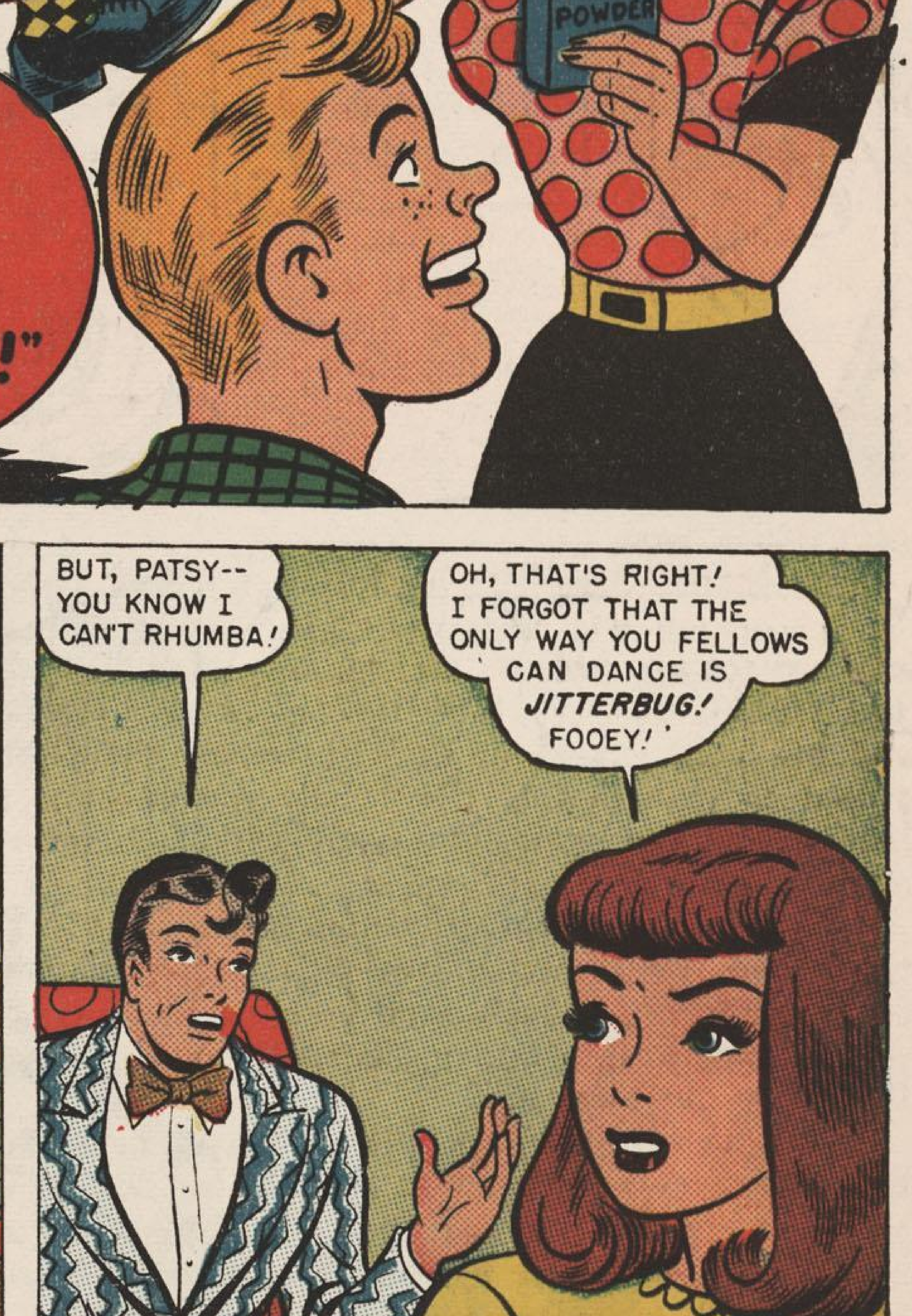
A moment later he was remarking, "By the way, did I ever tell you the story about Wagner when he was composing *Die Valkyrie*?" THE END

PATSY WALKER

"ON WITH THE DANCE!"

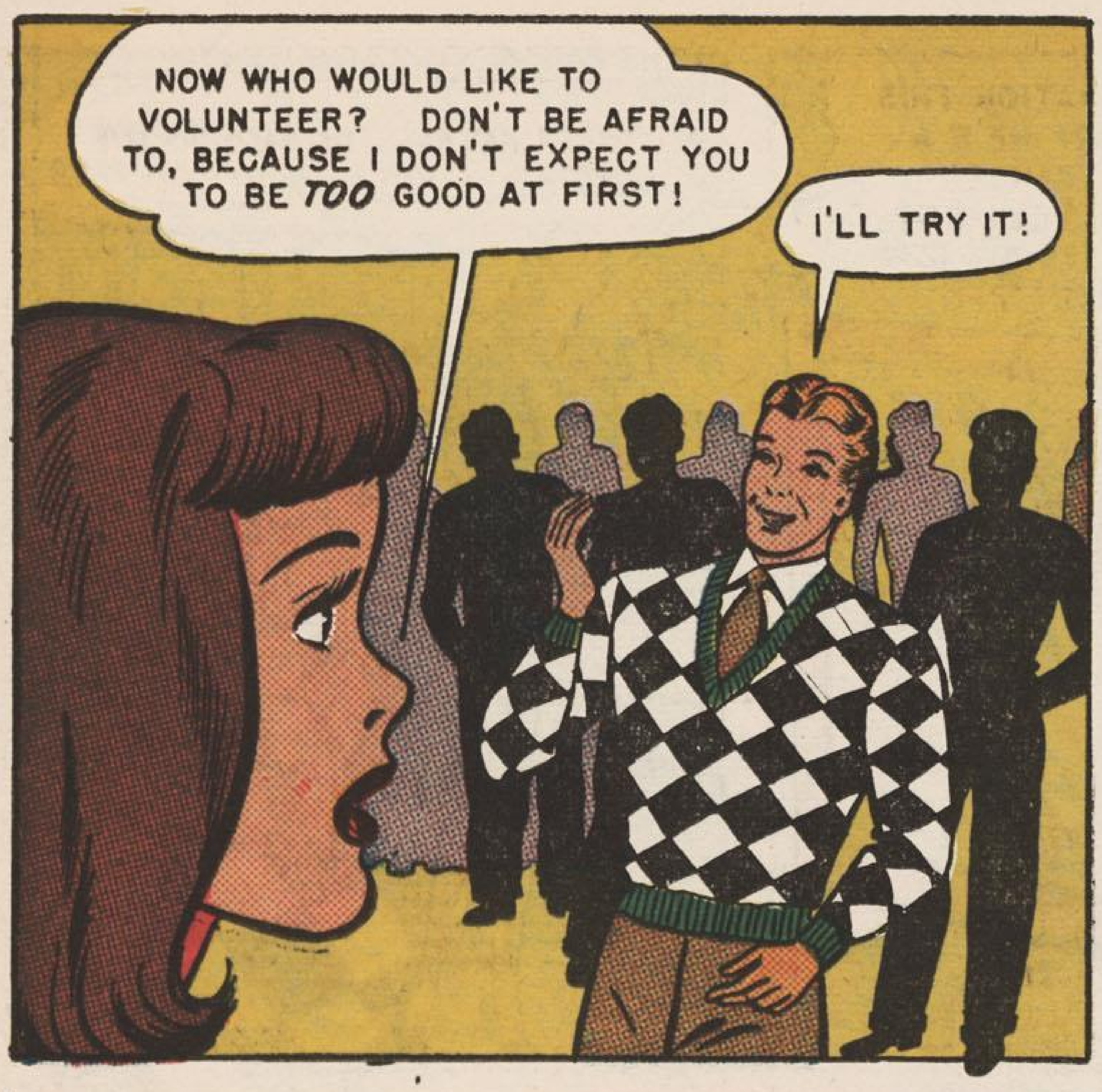

WHY, BUZZ! WHAT DO YOU MEAN, YOU CAN'T RHUMBA? YOU'RE *TERRIFIC*!
HEH, HEH, HEH!
I OVERHEARD HIM SAY HE WAS JUST *ITCHING* TO LEARN THE RHUMBA-- SO I PUT SOME OF THIS DOWN HIS BACK!
ITCH POWDER
3002

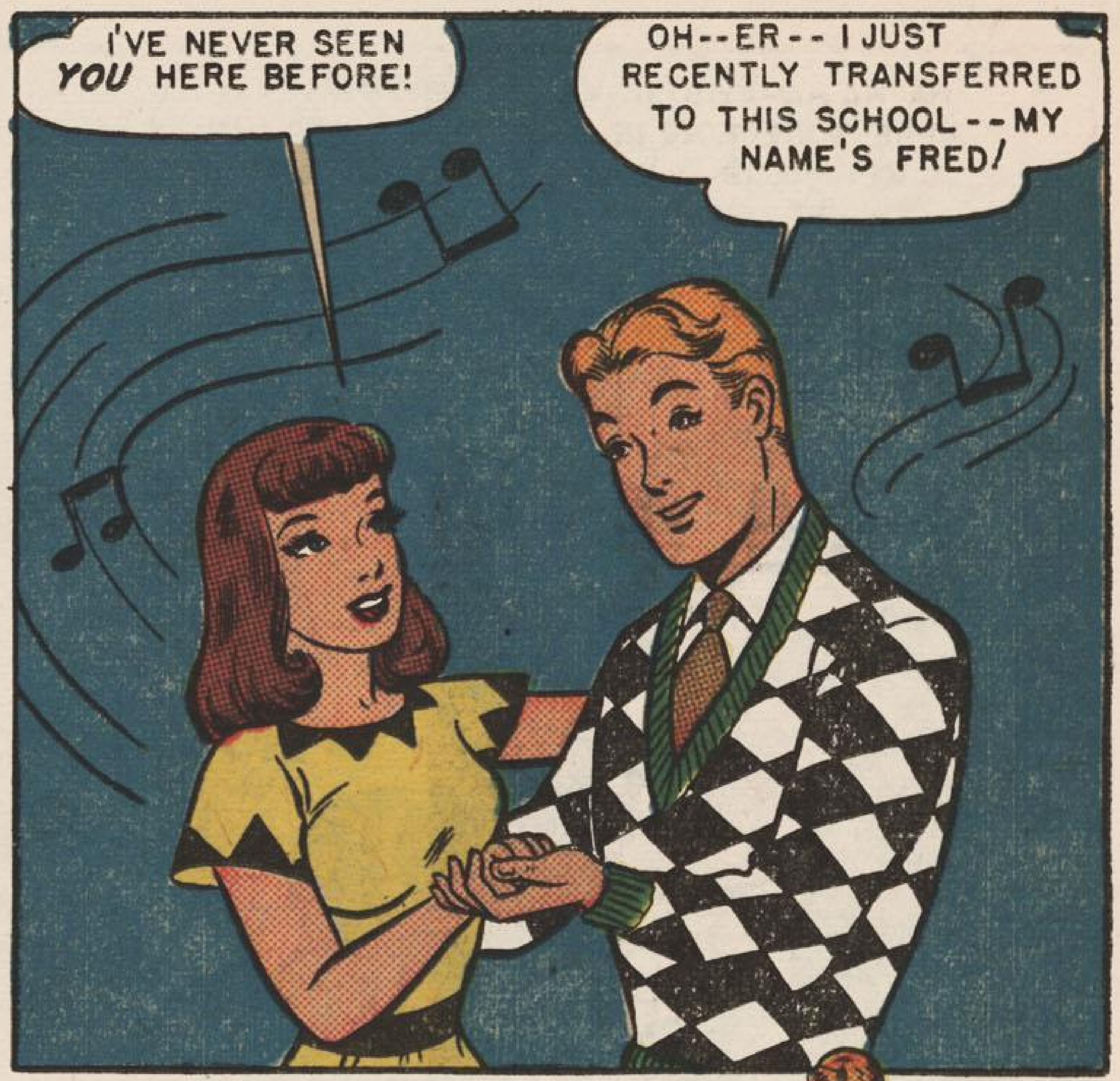

BUZZ, JUST LISTEN TO THAT TERRIFIC *RHUMBA*! C'MON-- LET'S DANCE!

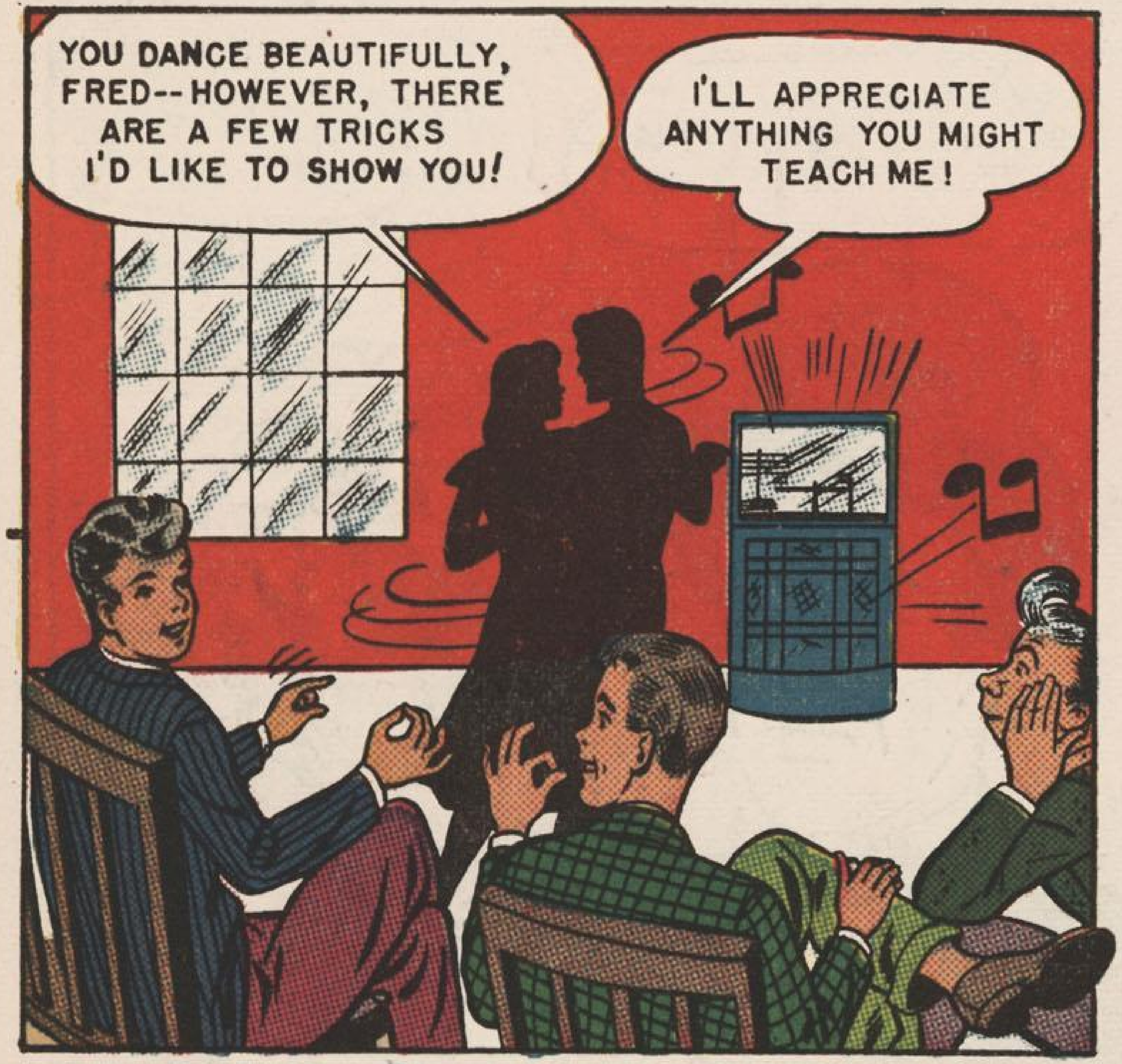

BUT, PATSY-- YOU KNOW I CAN'T RHUMBA!
OH, THAT'S RIGHT! I FORGOT THAT THE ONLY WAY YOU FELLOWS CAN DANCE IS *JITTERBUG*! FOOEY!
1

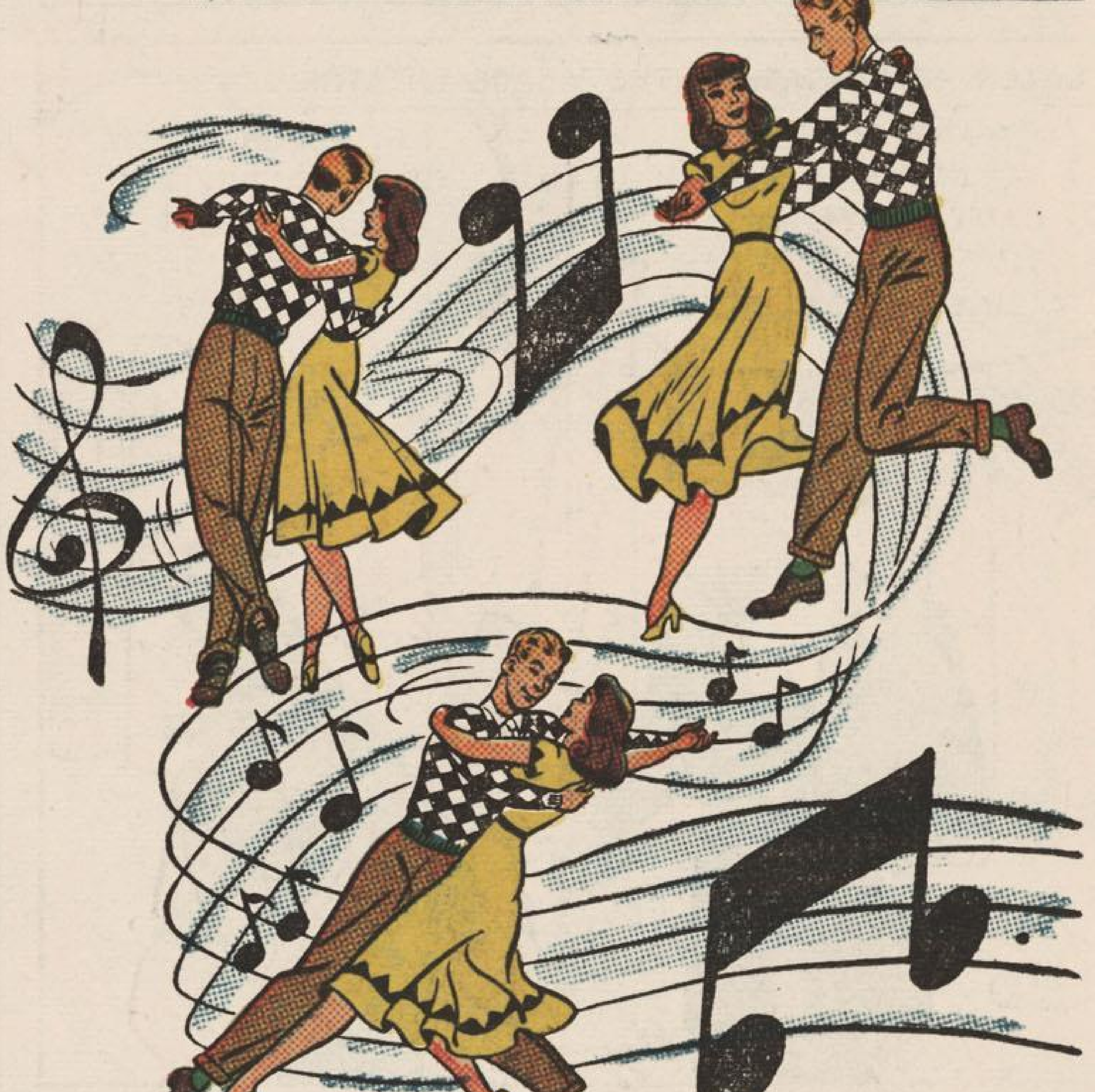
NEXT DAY...
GOLLY, NANCY, IT'S REALLY A SHAME THAT THE FELLOWS DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT BEAUTIFUL DANCES LIKE THE RHUMBA, TANGO, AND THE WALTZ!
YOU'RE NOT KIDDING! JITTERBUGGING KEEPS THE WAISTLINE SLIM, BUT IT ALSO MAKES YOU WONDER IF YOUR *BONES* ARE STILL INTACT!
IF ONLY THERE WERE *SOME* WAY WE COULD GET THEM TO LEARN *OTHER* DANCES!
LOOK, PATSY! DOESN'T *THAT* GIVE YOU AN IDEA?
ART CLUB MEETS TODAY IN ROOM 703
ATTENTION STUDENTS ANY STUDENTS INTERESTED IN STARTING A CLUB OF THEIR OWN -- SEE MISS SMITH IN ROOM 400.
E.H. Smith
WHY, PATSY! I THINK THAT'S A *SPLENDID* IDEA! YOU MAY USE ROOM 410 FOR YOUR *DANCE CLUB!*
OH, THANK YOU, MISS SMITH!
AND SO -- AFTER CLASSES...
I WANT PATSY TO TEACH ME SOME FANCY STEPS!
DON'T CROWD, PAL! WHAT D'YA THINK THE REST OF US ARE HERE FOR?
410
-DANCE CLUB- PATSY WALKER INSTRUCTOR NANCY BROWN ASSISTING LEARN TO RHUMBA CO, WALTZ
GOLLY, NANCY! I DIDN'T THINK WE'D GET A TURNOUT LIKE *THIS!*
WELL-C'MON! LET'S GET *STARTED!*
2

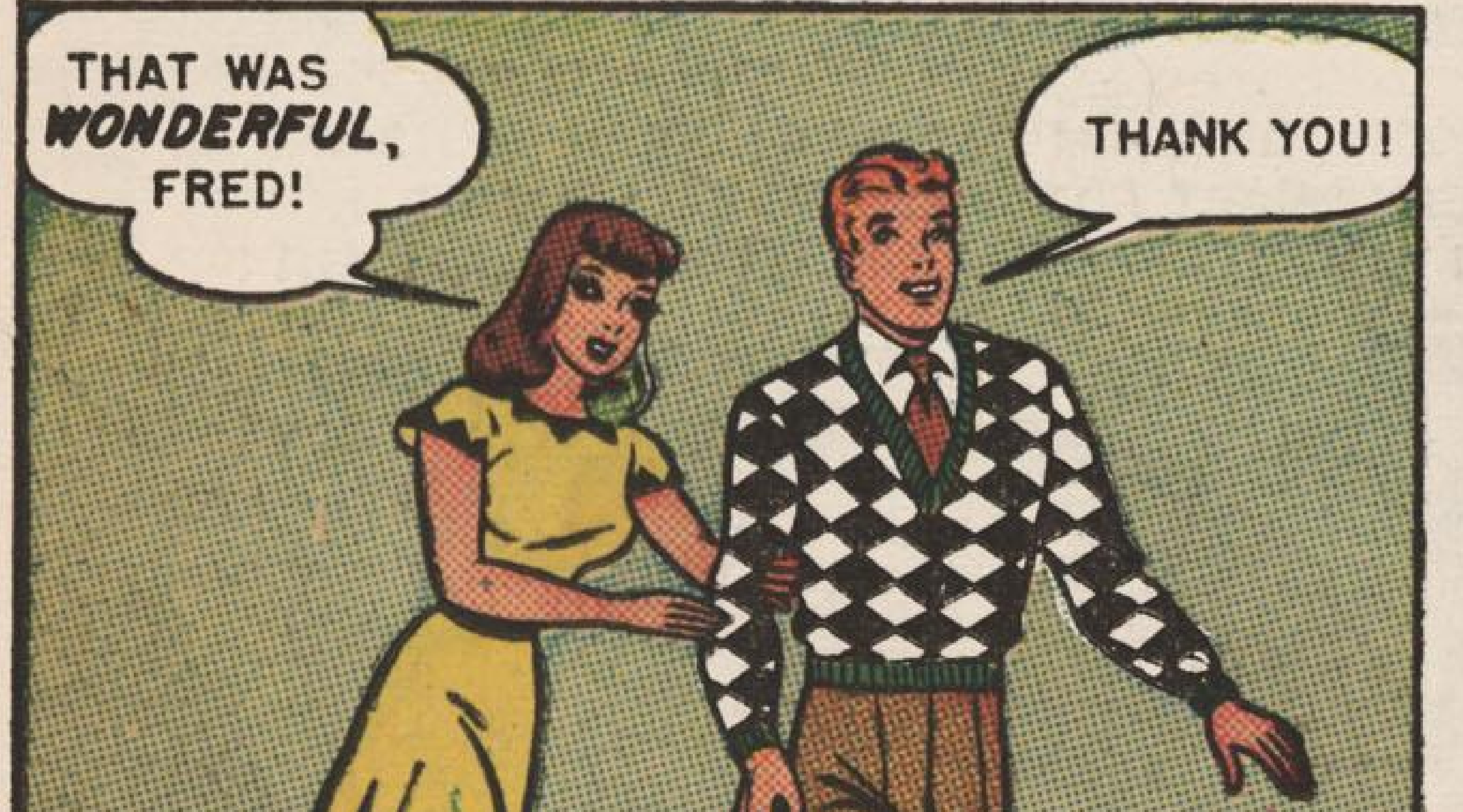
HMPH-- THAT PATSY WILL DO ANYTHING FOR ATTENTION! SHE'S GOT EVERY BOY IN IN SCHOOL IN THERE! I'VE JUST GOT TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THIS!
410
HMM-- THE PALACE THEATRE! THAT GIVES ME AN IDEA ON HOW TO BREAK UP PATSY'S LITTLE PARTY!
now at the PALACE THEATRE MR. ASTOR
LATER-- BACKSTAGE AT THE PALACE THEATRE...
I'M SORRY, MISS-- I'M A PRETTY BUSY MAN AND I CAN'T WASTE MY TIME APPEARING IN HIGH SCHOOL CLUBS!
MR. ASTOR! THINK OF THE PUBLICITY! BESIDES, THIS 50 DOLLARS IS YOURS IF YOU DO THIS LITTLE FAVOR FOR ME!
WELL, 50 BUCKS IS 50 BUCKS! I STILL THINK THERE'S SOMETHING FISHY, BUT I'LL BE THERE!
GOOD-NOW DON'T FORGET TO DRESS AS A HIGH SCHOOL BOY AND DO WHAT I TOLD YOU!
AND SO AT THE NEXT MEETING OF THE DANCE CLASS...
HELLO, PATSY DEAR! I'VE HEARD SO MUCH ABOUT YOUR DANCE CLASS-- MIND IF I WATCH?
OF COURSE NOT, HEDY! COME IN!
TODAY, BOYS, I'M GOING TO TEACH YOU SOME VERY SMART ROUTINES FOR BALLROOM DANCING! I'VE GOT SOME SPECIAL STEPS WORKED OUT!
5

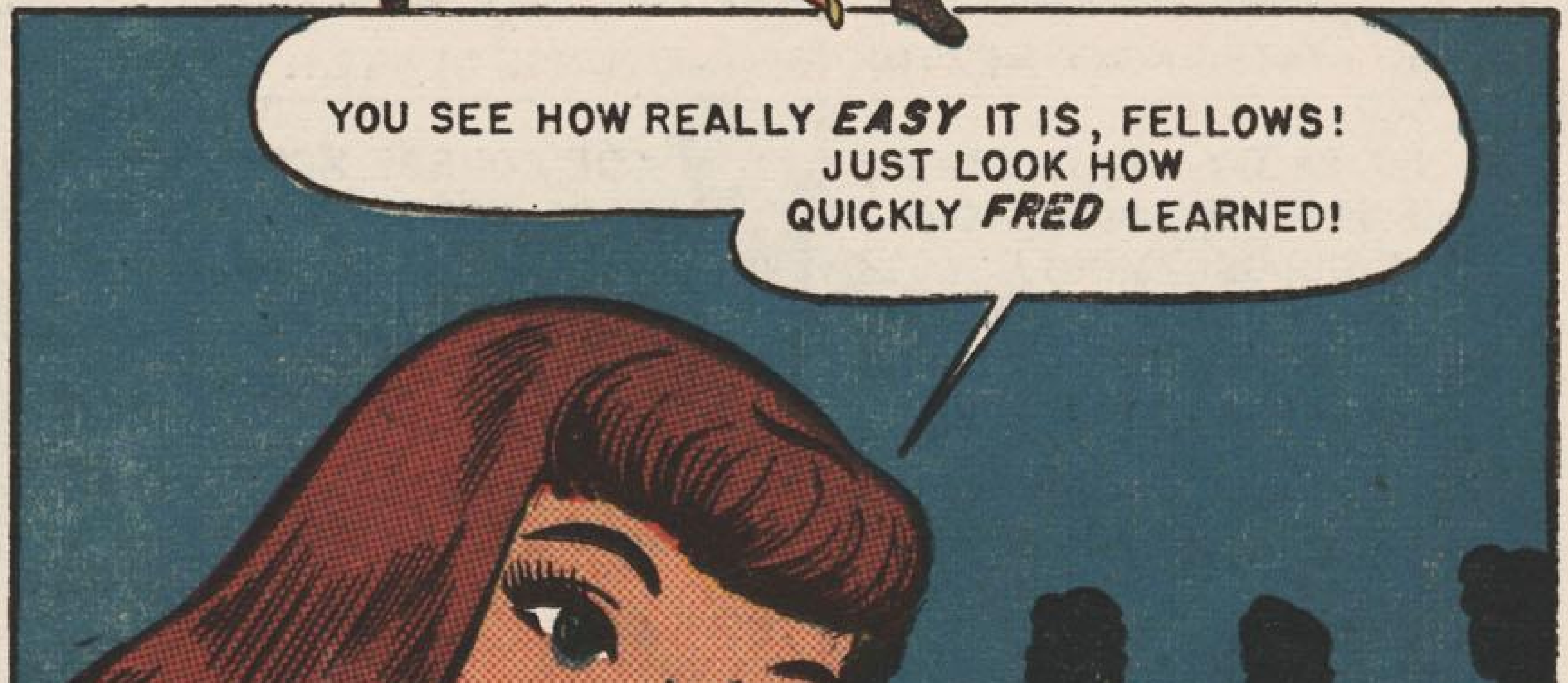

NOW WHO WOULD LIKE TO VOLUNTEER? DON'T BE AFRAID TO, BECAUSE I DON'T EXPECT YOU TO BE *TOO* GOOD AT FIRST!
I'LL TRY IT!


I'VE NEVER SEEN *YOU* HERE BEFORE!
OH--ER-- I JUST RECENTLY TRANSFERRED TO THIS SCHOOL--MY NAME'S FRED!


YOU DANCE BEAUTIFULLY, FRED--HOWEVER, THERE ARE A FEW TRICKS I'D LIKE TO SHOW YOU!
I'LL APPRECIATE ANYTHING YOU MIGHT TEACH ME!



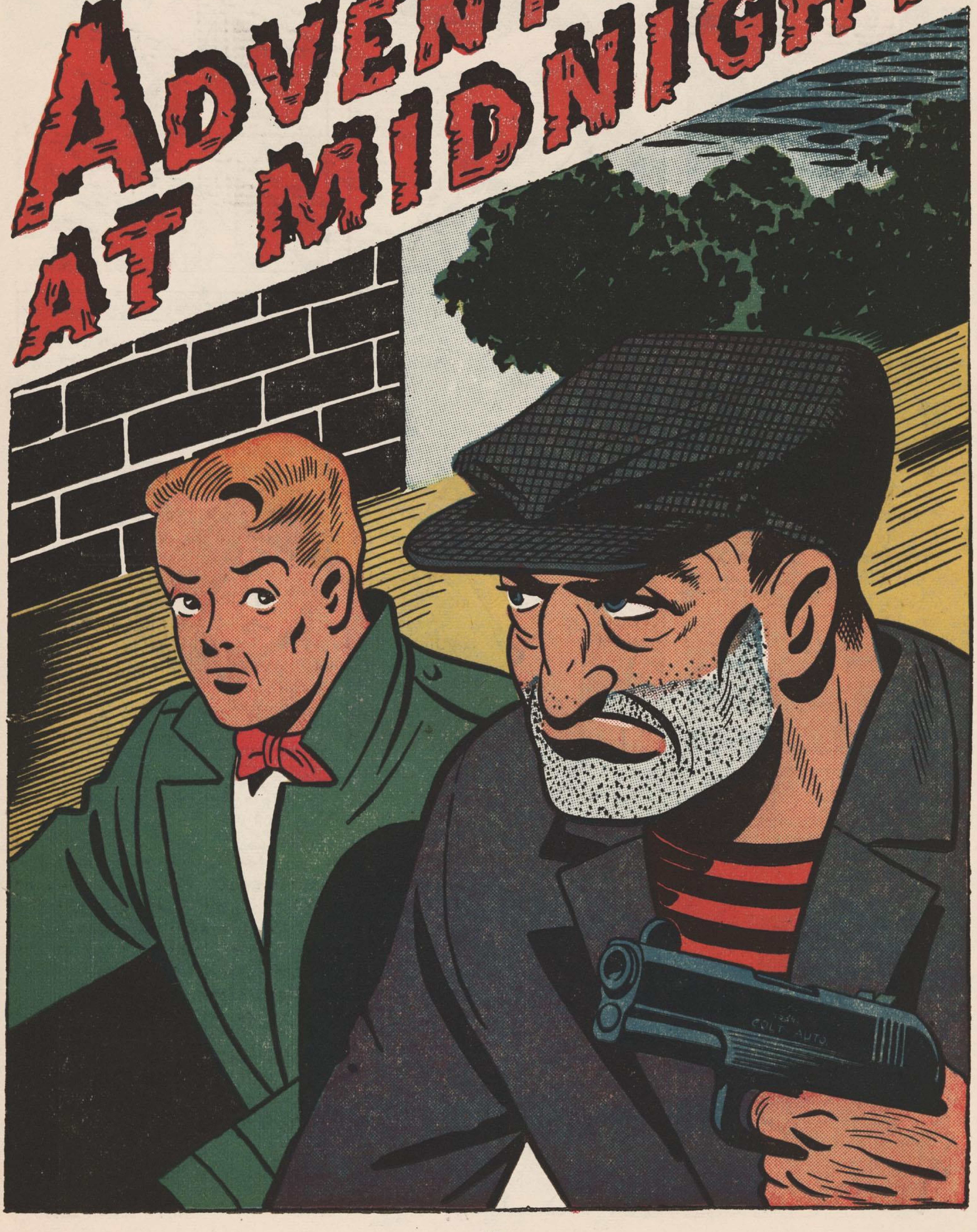

THAT WAS *WONDERFUL*, FRED!
THANK YOU!

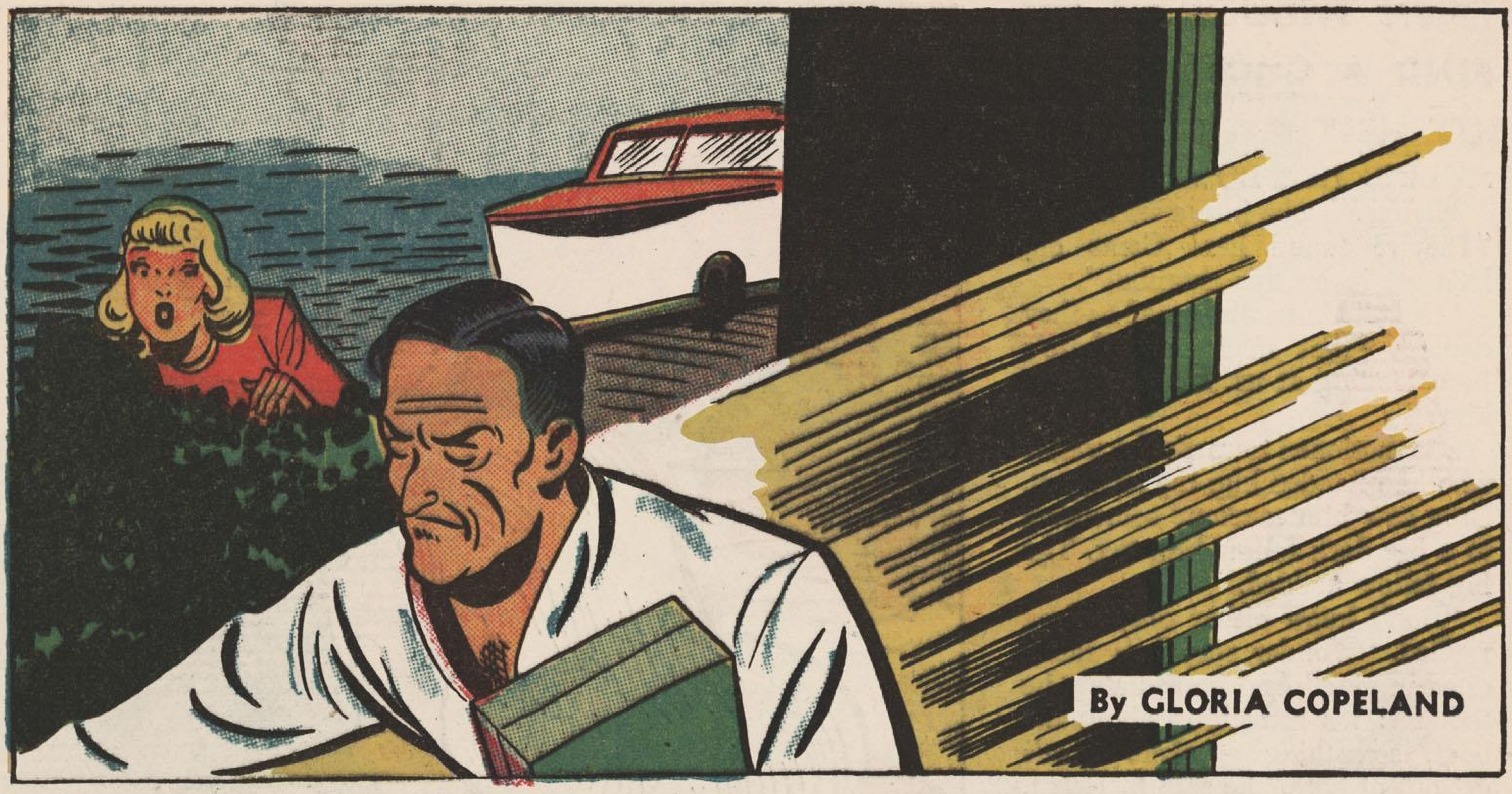

YOU SEE HOW REALLY *EASY* IT IS, FELLOWS! JUST LOOK HOW QUICKLY *FRED* LEARNED!
4

HA HA HA--YOU GUYS WERE SURE FOOLED THAT TIME--HAHAHA! PATSY PULLED A FAST ONE!
?
?
?
?
?
FOR YOUR INFORMATION THIS IS FRED ASTOR! HE'S A PROFESSIONAL DANCER! IMAGINE PATSY TRYING TO TELL YOU SHE TAUGHT HIM TO DANCE--HAH!
WELL, OF ALL THE LOW-DOWN TRICKS I DIDN'T COUNT ON THIS!
OH--I FEEL TERRIBLE! I'M SO HUMILIATED!
HERE'S YOUR FIFTY BUCKS! I WOULDN'T STOOP THIS LOW FOR A THOUSAND!
HUH?
?
PATSY--WAIT!
I MEANT IT WHEN I SAID YOU'RE TERRIFIC! AND I DID LEARN A LOT OF SWELL NEW ROUTINES! IN FACT, IF YOU'RE INTERESTED, I'D BE PROUD TO HAVE YOU APPEAR AS MY PARTNER AT THE PALACE THEATRE FOR A WEEK!
OH--
THE NEXT EVENING...
AREN'T THEY WONDERFUL?
PATSY IS LOVELY!
IT WAS NICE OF HER TO GET PASSES FOR US ALL!
EVEN FOR HEDY, BUT SHE DIDN'T COME-TSK! TSK!
END
5

HELEN THOUGHT SHE AND GREG MIGHT FIND A GHOST ON SNUG ISLAND— BUT NEITHER OF THEM EXPECTED TO FIND THEMSELVES IN THE MIDDLE OF AN . . .

ADVENTURE AT MIDNIGHT





By GLORIA COPELAND

IT was the day after the payroll robbery at the Cape Jordan Airport. The two unidentified thieves had taken $30,000 intended for the United States Air Corps training base nearby. All of Cape Jordan's resort crowd was talking about it—all except Greg and Helen who were completely absorbed in each other.

"How about a cruise to Snug Island tomorrow?" Greg asked as he steered his fifteen-foot *Seahorse II* back to the Cape Jordan dock.

"Snug Island?" Helen said. "Isn't that the Lafitte brothers' hideout? I'd love to go!"

"It *was* their hideout back around 1810," Greg smiled. "But it's still got atmosphere. We can pack a lunch and make a day of it. Meet me tomorrow on the dock at ten?"

"M-mm—ten-thirty. Got to get my beauty sleep!"

And she'd vanished before he could even ask her for a goodnight kiss.

. . . "My dad told me all about Snug Island," Helen said, lolling back on her pillow in the bow. "Seems Jean Lafitte had to leave a sailor there once because the boat he and his men were escaping in wasn't big enough for one more."

"Uh-huh, and I suppose his ghost haunts the island to this day."

"You're so cynical, Greg!" But she wrinkled her nose at him. She slipped off her mocs and rolled her dungarees up a little. Her skin was darker than her long wavy hair, and her pedicured feet and legs were the color of toast just the way Greg liked it for breakfast.

"O.K. If you see a ghost, I keep a belaying pin in the stern locker."

The island was a rugged hump of land off by itself in the blue Gulf waters. They circled it, looking for a place to land.

"Doesn't look like *anything's* alive on it," Greg observed.

"Just a couple of sea gulls. I'm hungry. Aren't you?"

They landed on the nearest sandy beach, hurriedly gathered driftwood for a fire, and soon the smell of crackling frankfurters was making their mouths water. Greg daubed the first one with mustard and held it for Helen to take a bite. But she was staring beyond him with frightened, wide-open eyes. He looked, too—and promptly dropped the frank.

In the nearby thicket was a face—a hairy face burnt brown from sun, with haggard eyes that might have scared a locomotive off the track.

"Get out!" snarled the face.

"Wh-who are you?" Greg retorted. He put his arm protectively around Helen.

"Never mind who I am." He stepped forward, and sunlight glowed along the barrel of the revolver in his hand. He wore nothing but tattered, once white trousers. "This island's mine, and get out fast!"

"L-let's go, Greg!" Helen whispered.

They quickly packed up their lunch box. The man with the gun moved back into the underbrush. Greg was too sore to talk. But five seconds later, he heard the sound of a motorboat starting and looked up.

"Hey, you!—Blazes!"

"He's taken the *Seahorse*!"

Helplessly, they watched the man in the boat grow smaller—and then disappear. They made their fire smoke with wet driftwood, but it was mid-afternoon before a fishing smack answered their signals.

"Cheer up, Greg." Helen tried to smile as they stood on the dock once more in Cape Jordan. "People can't hide stolen boats too easily, you know."

"Right, Helen. Anyhow, let's forget our troubles and go dancing at the Schooner Inn tonight."

. . . Cape Jordan's Schooner Inn was the biggest dining and dancing spot in the town—and the most popular. Greg and Helen had a table near the orchestra, but they spent most of their time on the dance floor.

"Paging Mr. Moore! . . . Telegram for Gregory Moore!"

"Maybe it's about the *Seahorse*!" Helen said.

Gregg claimed it and read rapidly:

SEAHORSE FOUND UNDAMAGED 5 MILES NORTH CAPE JORDAN. COAST PATROL SAILING HER DOWN.

His face broke into a wide grin. "They've found her! Come on, let's get in on this rhumba!"

"Greg," Helen whispered as they danced, "that man over there's been looking at us. Do you know him?"

She motioned towards the waiter who had handed him the telegram. Greg saw him murmur something to a big dark fellow in a tux. The big fellow nodded.

"Don't know either one," Greg replied. "Wonder why he's interested in me?" And immediately he thought: it's something about the boat, something crooked. "Let's get out of here," he said to Helen.

Outdoors Greg felt better. "That dark fellow looks nasty to me. If he knows anything about the mystery man who stole my boat, he'd know from my telegram and my grinning face I've got it back."

"And they'd know you were on the lookout for the mystery man."

"Exactly. I've got to dope this out."

"Why not leave it to the Coast Patrol?"

"Because they didn't see the mystery man and *I* did."

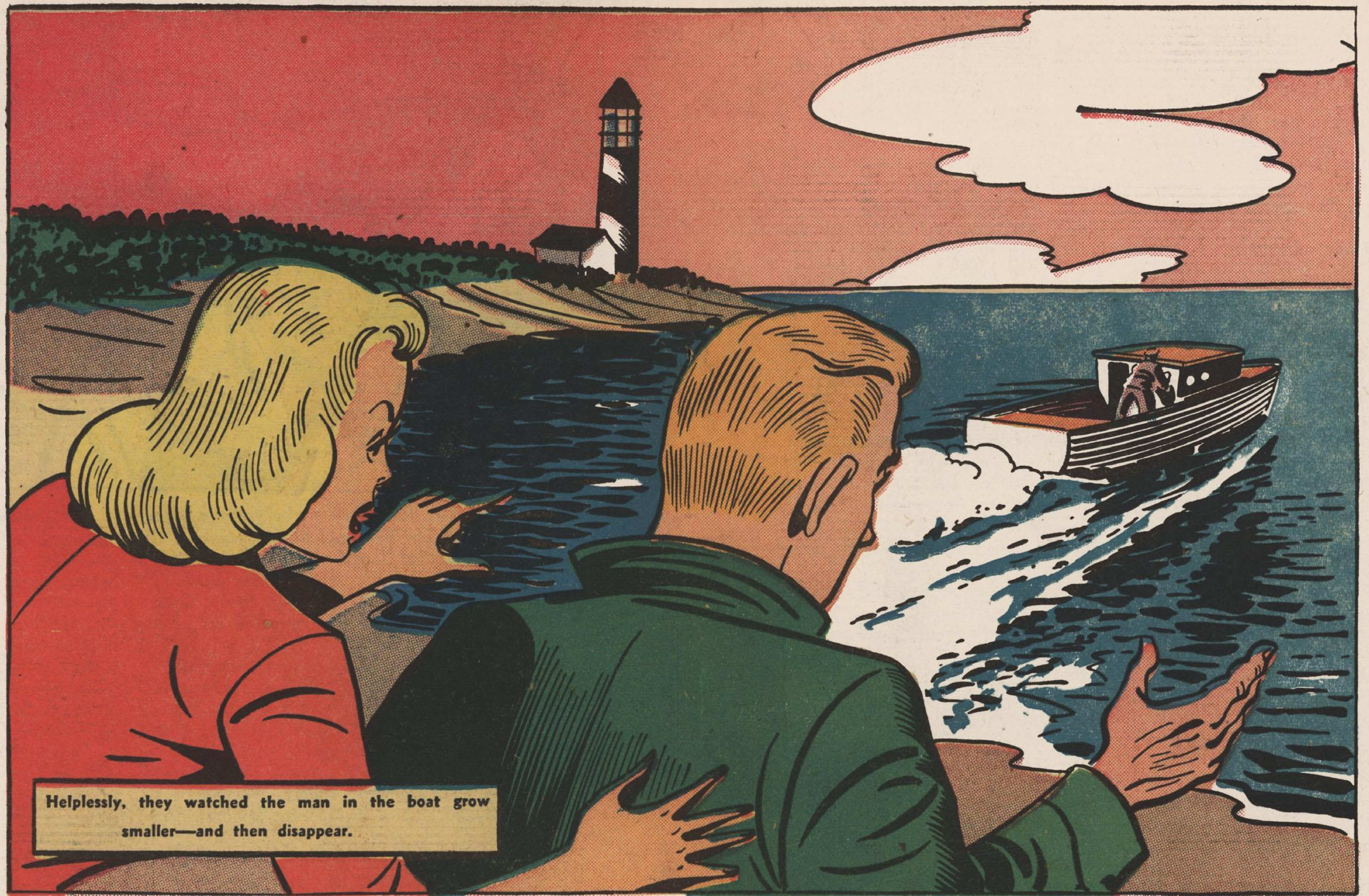
"*We* did. Listen, Sherlock, if you go on any adventures, count me in."

"Check, bright eyes. But how about that beauty sleep you're always talking about?"

"I do believe you're trying to get rid of me, Mr. Sherlock!"

That hurt him a little, but he couldn't go investigating around the docks at midnight with a girl—and he was going to do just that. He scoured the docks and the lighted section of the town, but he didn't see anyone who looked like the man on the island. One didn't see men like him very often, with eyes like a caged-up panther, and Greg knew if he ever caught a glimpse of him again, he'd recognize him.

Greg had just rounded the palm treed corner of the block where his own family's cottage was, when a hand grabbed him violently by the shirt front.



Helplessly, they watched the man in the boat grow smaller—and then disappear.

"Hey!"

"Shut up, kid. I've got a knife in my other hand!"

Greg looked into the eyes he had searched for hours to find—the man from the island! He was shaven now and in a Palm Beach suit, but he didn't look any more attractive.

"I can't be dodging *you* all the time and the Schooner Inn gang, too, so I decided to say hello," he told Greg grimly.

"Well, hello. Enjoy your cruise in my boat?"

"Don't get funny!" He dragged Greg through a hibiscus hedge into the shadows of the palms. "My name's Carter. I've got a deal to make with you if you're game. —And guess what'll happen if you're not!"

"Let's have it."

"The Schooner Inn gang did the Cape Jordan Airport robbery two nights ago. I did the dirty work, and they dumped me on Snug Island for the sea gulls to pick. Well, I'm back to run all of 'em into the cops, see?"

"The Schooner Inn gang?"

"Sure. Led by the manager, Mr. Jack Crow," Carter said sarcastically. "Or aren't you interested in the fact that the Cape Jordan Airport money is in the Schooner's safe right now?"

"Sure I'm interested!"

Carter looked around him. "I've got to go. See you same place, same time tomorrow night." He vanished, as suddenly as he had appeared.

Greg looked at his watch. Ten minutes to one. And tomorrow night he'd promised to take Helen to the midnight preview at the Dolphin Theatre!

. . . "But we've *got* to stay for the end," Helen protested in a whisper.

"You stay," Greg whispered back. "I—I really don't feel well, Helen. Will you excuse me?" And he slipped out to the aisle. He felt rotten about leaving her, but the time had crept up and he didn't have an extra minute.

Lucky the meeting place was only three blocks away, Greg thought. Then he wondered why he'd used the word "lucky." How did he know what he was getting into? Carter wasn't going straight, he knew. And he was tying himself up in the whole mess on the slim chance of being able to turn Carter in!

"Hello," said Carter's voice.

Greg stopped on a dime.

"Here's my pal. Call him Shark. Only he's not from these waters." Carter gestured to the hulk of a man in gray suit and cap behind him.

"Hello," Greg murmured, feeling sick.

"Oh-oh. Here comes someone," Carter said. "Head for the pier. Easy. Like we're taking a walk."

Greg glanced over his shoulder at the sound of the footsteps, and his heart sank down to his shoes. It was *Helen!* He saw her stare at him for a moment, then turn on her heel and walk away.

Neither Shark nor Carter had turned to look at her, Greg saw with relief. If they had, they'd have gotten rid of her then and there. But what did Helen think of him, strolling along with the toughest looking characters Cape Jordan had seen since the days of Jean Lafitte? The evening seemed one big mess, and it was getting worse all the time.

"Shark and I are going to walk in the front door of the Schooner Inn tomorrow night and push the whole gang out through the back, see?" Carter said. "The police'll be waiting. You're to stand in the back alley and fire this gun when you see Shark come through the door. That'll bring the cops on. Get it?"

Greg felt the cool handle of a revolver in his palm. "I get it. But why not have the cops in the back alley?"

"Because the Schooner gang's got spotters around for blocks, you dumb kid! Only *you* won't look like a cop, see?"

. . . The next day seemed to Greg the gloomiest he'd ever known. It began with a fine drizzle that promised to keep up for days. And Helen wouldn't speak to him on the telephone. He tried her twelve times.

"Maybe the thirteenth is lucky," he said to himself, and dropped a nickel in the slot.

This time she did talk—but it was almost worse than silence.

"Obviously you had more important business to take care of last night than *me!* For your tender years, Mr. Moore, you keep awfully tough company."

He gulped.

"And I'm sure," she went on, "you know a lot more about the Cape Jordan Airport robbery than you admit. Were you putting on that naive-young-man stuff for me? I'm not *that* naive, thanks, and I don't like your type."

Greg felt so low that he tried desperately to whistle as he left the booth, but the tune was an off-key funeral march.

By ten o'clock that night Greg couldn't stand it any longer. He went to Helen's hotel.

"You!" She tried to close the door.

But his foot stopped her. "I'm not selling magazines, but I've *got* to talk to you for five minutes, Helen!"

"I'll give you two and a half."

Greg talked as fast as a tobacco auctioneer. And gradually Helen's expression changed.

"You can't meet them tonight, Greg. You'll be killed!"

"Not if you help me, Helen. I've got a scheme of my own. It's my guess Carter's got a car waiting for him farther down the alley. They're just using me as cover to get away. But if you stand near the car and make like you've got a gun when Shark rustles me toward you—"

Helen was already at the closet for her raincoat. "Let's go, Sherlock!"

. . . At eleven sharp Greg leaned against a fence in the alley back of the Schooner Inn, listening for trouble. The revolver in his raincoat pocket felt as heavy as a cannon-ball. Far to his left, he could just make out the fuzzy gray figure of Helen through the drizzle. There hadn't been any car down the alley when he left her, but he was sure one would arrive any minute. And there wasn't a sign of the police. What had he got himself into? he wondered, swallowing hard. What had he got *Helen* into?

He listened to the Schooner's orchestra playing his favorite waltz and wondered if he and Helen would ever dance to it again.

Then it happened.

Shark shouldered his way out of the Schooner's back door with a cloth bag of something in his hand.

Greg pulled the trigger without taking the revolver from his pocket. Nothing happened. He yanked the gun out and pulled the trigger again. A blank cartridge! He might have known!

"This way, kid! And fast!" Shark grabbed his arm and began to run. "*Fast*, I said!"

Greg glanced over his shoulder, holding back as much as he could. He saw Carter next, coming out the back door with a gun in one hand and what looked like a metal box in the other.

"Helen!" Greg shouted desperately. Helen had to run or else!

Suddenly Greg heard a scream that sounded like ten police sirens all shrieking at once. It came from Helen's direction. Now he could see her, standing in the shadows.

"Get going, kid!" Carter poked him with his gun. "*Run*, will you, Shark? I locked 'em in the basement, but they won't stay there forever!"

They had thirty more yards to run.

"Hey!" called a voice from behind them. "Stop! Thief!—*Police*!"

Three shots rang out. The Schooner gang was firing. A fourth shot went through Greg's raincoat sleeve.

Then the sirens came—from two or three directions. Helen's scream had brought them—not the Schooner gang's shots. But Carter and Shark were already at the unlighted car that awaited them in the alley.

"Stick 'em up!" said a husky female voice in what Greg recognized as Helen's best imitation of a she-detective. "This gun's loaded."

It worked. Shark released him for a split second in surprise, and in that instant Greg launched the hardest right cross of his career. Shark dropped like a dead fish.

"No, you don't!" Carter snapped at him, pointing his revolver. "Get in that car!"

The sirens came closer, but they were still a block away. Carter wasn't falling for Helen's act.

Then Greg saw Helen's arm flash in a quick movement behind Carter's back, and he heard a dull thud. Carter staggered forward and fell.

"Helen!"

"I didn't have a gun, but it's a dumb girl that doesn't carry a *rock*!"

Before he knew it, he had planted a kiss on Helen's lips, but it was a half-miss.

A policeman ran toward them. "Get 'em up, you two!"

Greg tried to stammer an explanation.

The policeman saw Carter—and that was enough. "Brett Carter! And I'll bet that's the Airport money."

"Right!" Greg said. "You see I—I mean we—"

"We knocked 'em out," Helen said succinctly.

"I can see that," replied the policeman.

"Golly! Look at your raincoat!" Helen exclaimed.

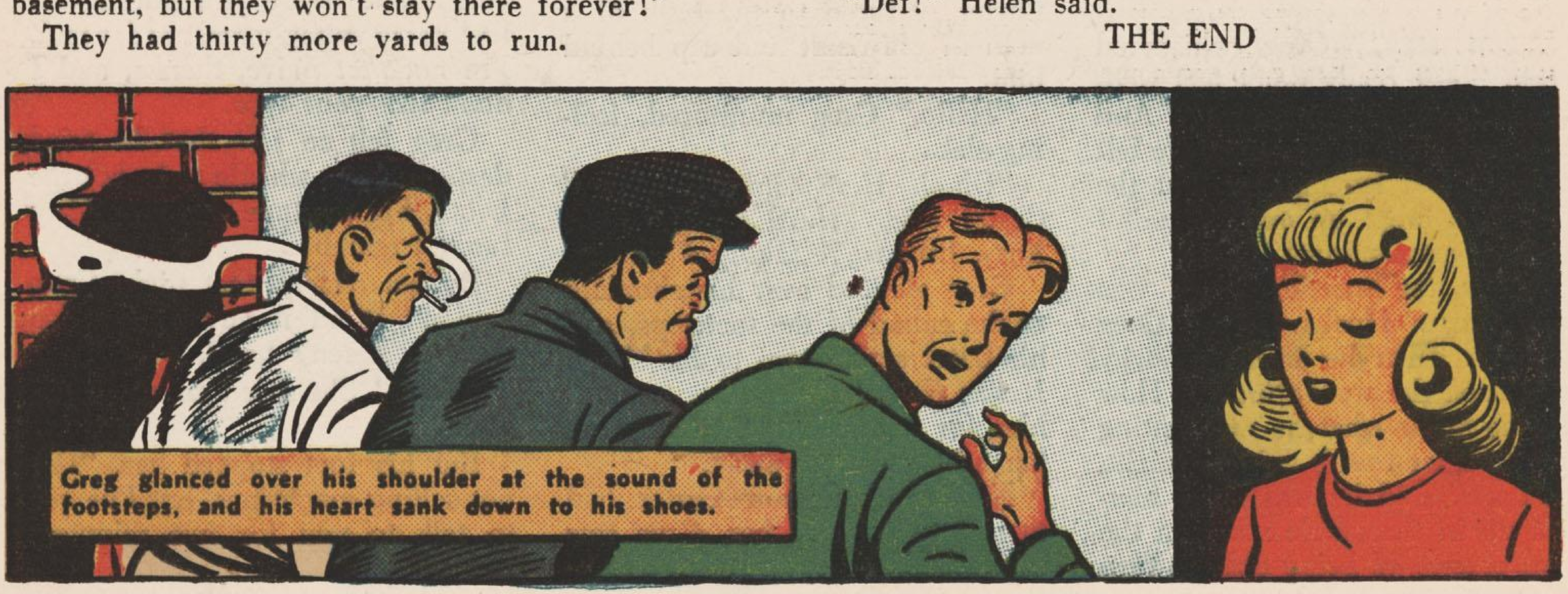
Greg looked where she pointed. There were three brown-edged holes where bullets had gone in and out of one sleeve.

"With the reward you'll get for these two *plus* the Schooner gang," said another policeman, "you can afford a new one."

"Say, Helen, how about a coconut soda for a pick-me-up and a retake on that kiss?"

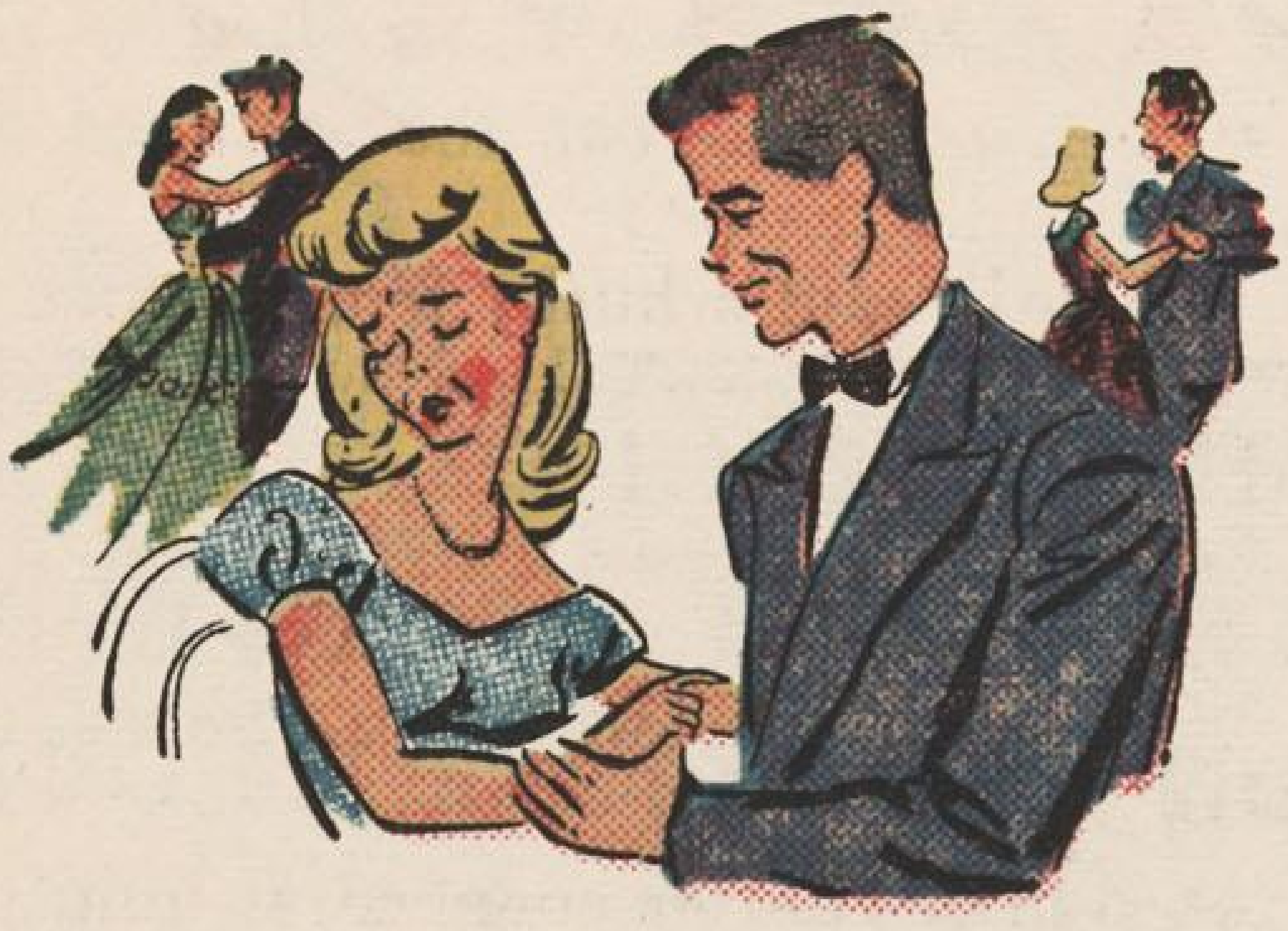
"Def!" Helen said.

THE END


Greg glanced over his shoulder at the sound of the footsteps, and his heart sank down to his shoes.

It's "Captivating Clara" Now

...Thanks to COVERMARK!

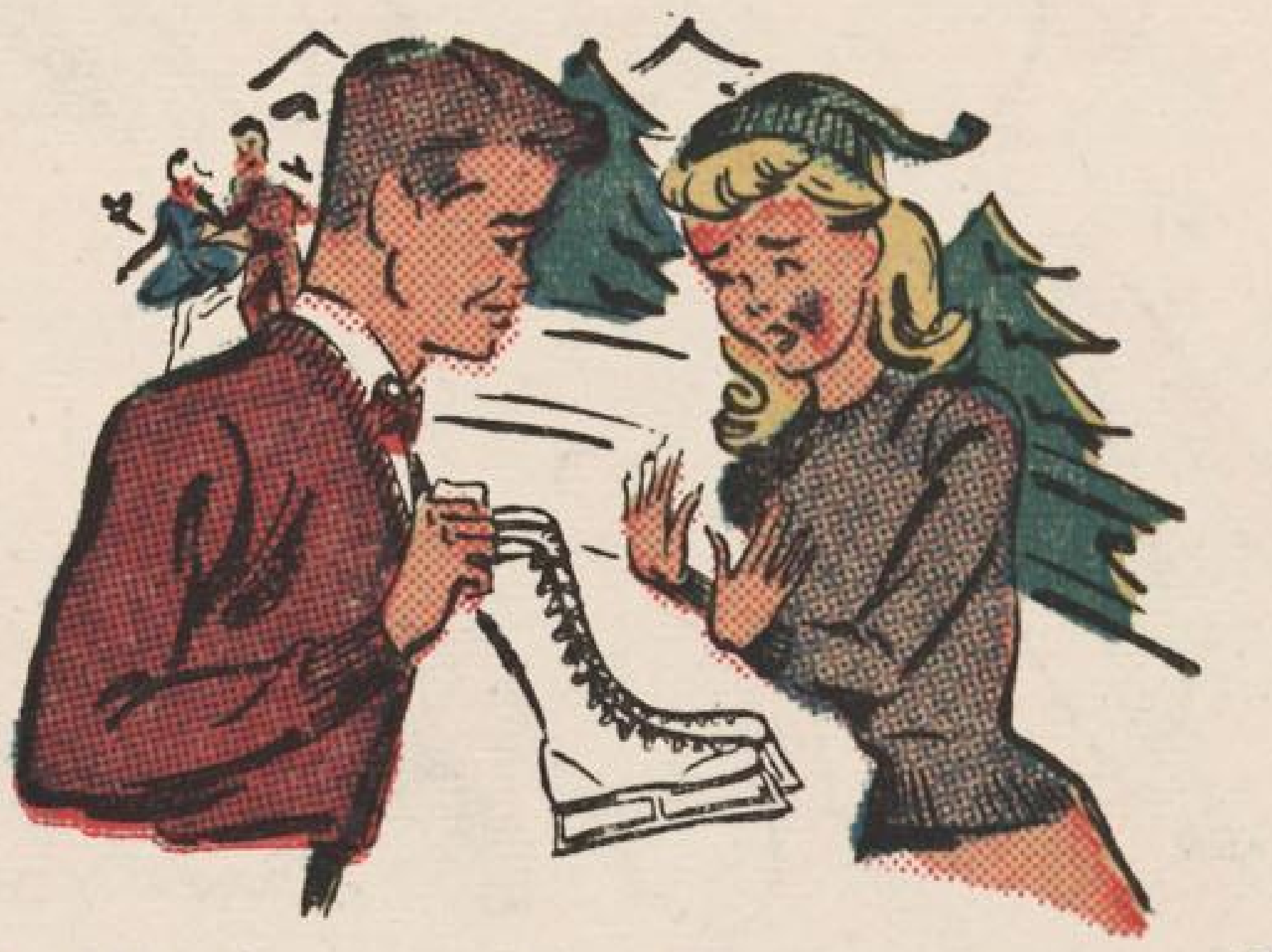


1.

BOB—*"May I have this dance, Sis?"*

CLARA—*"Thanks, Bob, but I'd rather you'd take me home."*

It was always like this...

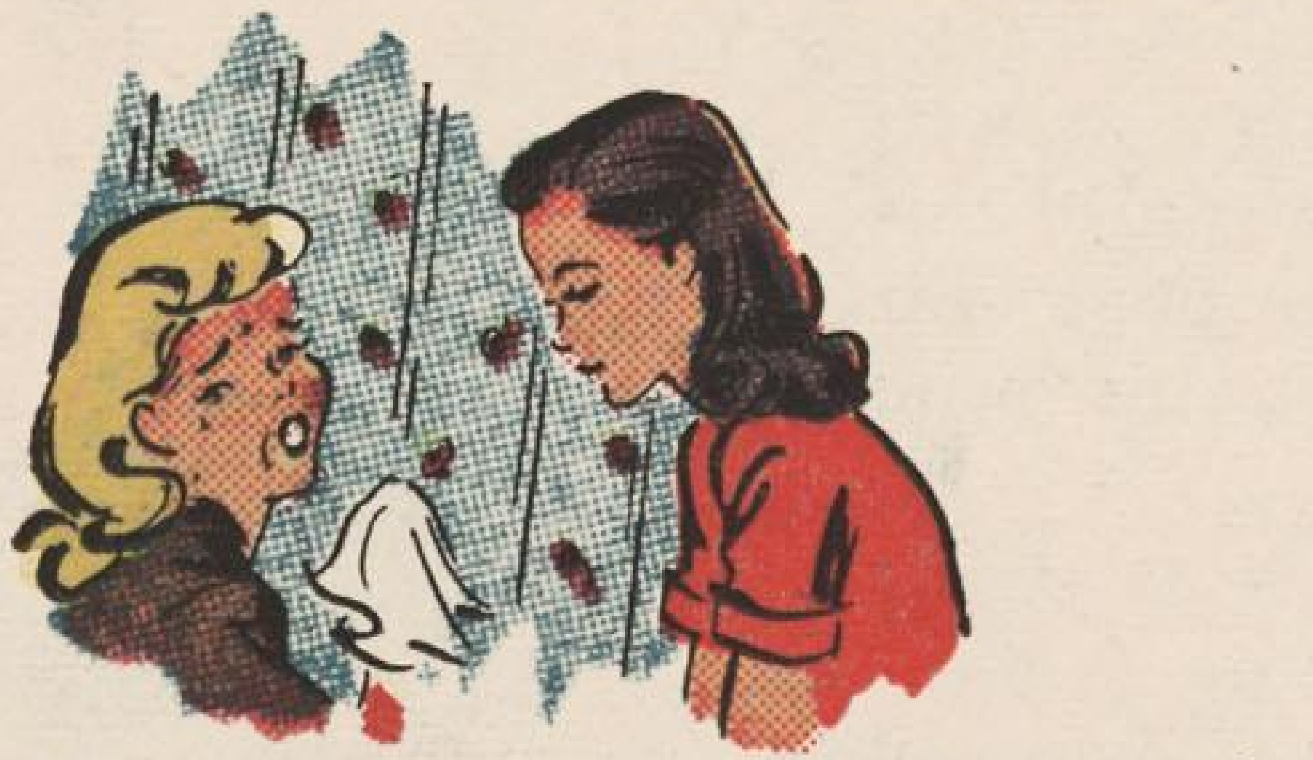


2.

BOB—*"Here's your skates, Sis. Get a move on!"*

CLARA—*"Oh, Bob, I wish I hadn't come."*

or this...

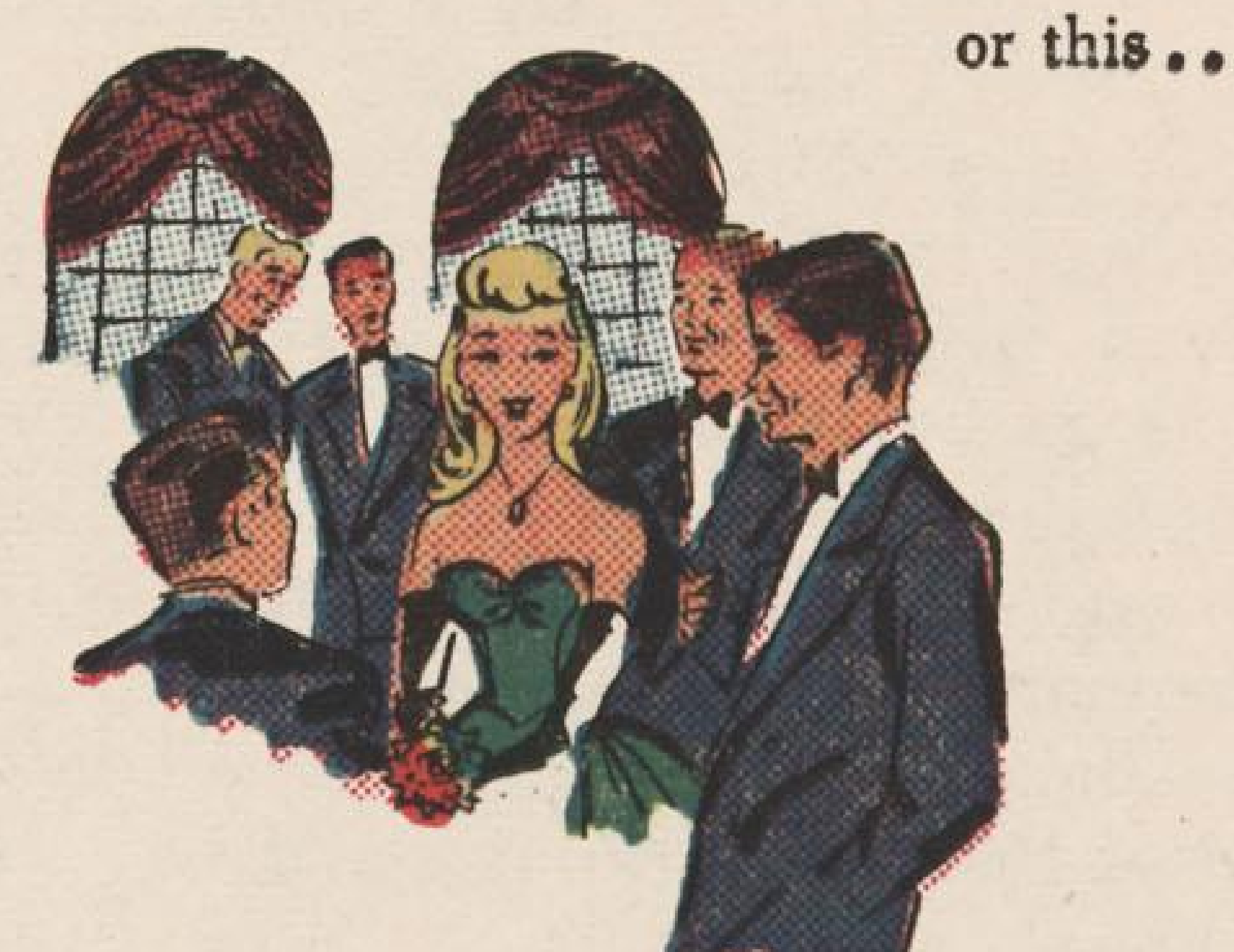


3.

CLARA—*"It's sweet of you, Betty, but I just can't be your bridesmaid."*

BETTY—*"Clara, you darling, of course you can! Haven't you heard of Lydia O'Leary's wonderful* COVERMARK*? I use it on the leg scar you never knew I had, and I'm sure it would conceal that birthmark perfectly."*

until Bob got engaged...



4.

JIM—*"Hey, Beautiful, you promised me this dance, remember?"*

HOWARD—*"Okay, Gorgeous, but we're going skating tomorrow night . . . and how!"*

... and now I'm so happy!

A Birthmark Ruining All Your Good Times? • A Facial Blemish Cutting You Out of The Fun? Boys Calling You "Freckle Face"?

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Called "the Modern Miracle"* by Reader's Digest, this wonder-working cream does far more than conceal all kinds of blemishes . . . temporary or permanent. It has changed thousands of lives, too. Men, girls, women of all ages, and children have INSTANTLY overcome the tragic handicap of conspicuous facial and body blemishes with COVERMARK . . . the cream that COMPLETELY conceals!

So if you have a blemish that is making you miserable, giving you an inferiority complex or spoiling your chances of business and social success, mail coupon below for COVERMARK. Follow the simple directions — look in your mirror. You'll be so amazed and thrilled, you won't believe your own eyes. That blemish has vanished COMPLETELY . . . and no one will know how you did it.

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Send me in plain wrapper 1 jar of COVERMARK. I'll pay postman $2 plus postage and C.O.D. charges. If I'm not pleased, you are to refund my money

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RED HAIR —Light ☐ tan medium. Average ☐ peach.
BRUNETTE —Light ☐ peach. Average ☐ dark olive.
(for darker skin tone, just use darker powder over COVERMARK)
☐ I am enclosing $2. You are to pay all postage.

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THE Clinging Vine

ELAINE KNEW MOST OF THE ANSWERS, BUT SOMEHOW SHE DIDN'T ALWAYS COME OUT ON TOP. AND THIS TIME SHE SIMPLY HAD TO!

By RUTH COGAN

ELAINE'S velvety brown eyes gazed dreamily at Larry Tompkins as he removed the hot dog from the stick, blanketed it in a roll and applied just the right amount of mustard and relish. He was, she thought proudly, exactly the kind of Prince Charming she'd always hoped to meet.

As he held out the sizzling frankfurt to her, his happy grin of self-satisfaction met her sweet, feminine "thank-you" smile and gradually succumbed to a sort of other-worldly look—as if he'd suddenly been transported to a magic land way up in the clouds. His wonder at the beauties it held almost landed the hot dog into Elaine's lap! But the chatter of the rest of the gang brought him back to reality, and he handed it to her without any mishaps.

Warm little butterflies cavorted through Elaine's insides the whole afternoon—all the time she was reminiscing with the other kids about the wonderful summer they'd had or while they were playing handball on the smooth white beach—and especially when they went down for a late afternoon swim.

"Want another lesson?" Larry asked.

"But def!" she bubbled. "There won't be many more—the summer's almost over."

"Oh, Elaine . . ." he hesitated a minute, then hurried on. "I didn't want to tell you till the day was over, but—well, it's the last beach party, and I guess I may as well spill it now. My folks decided this morning that we're leaving for Kingston tomorrow—so this swim is the last."

Elaine looked at him as if she didn't want to believe it.

Larry kept talking. "But you live in Kingston, too. And we'll be in the same high school so it isn't so bad."

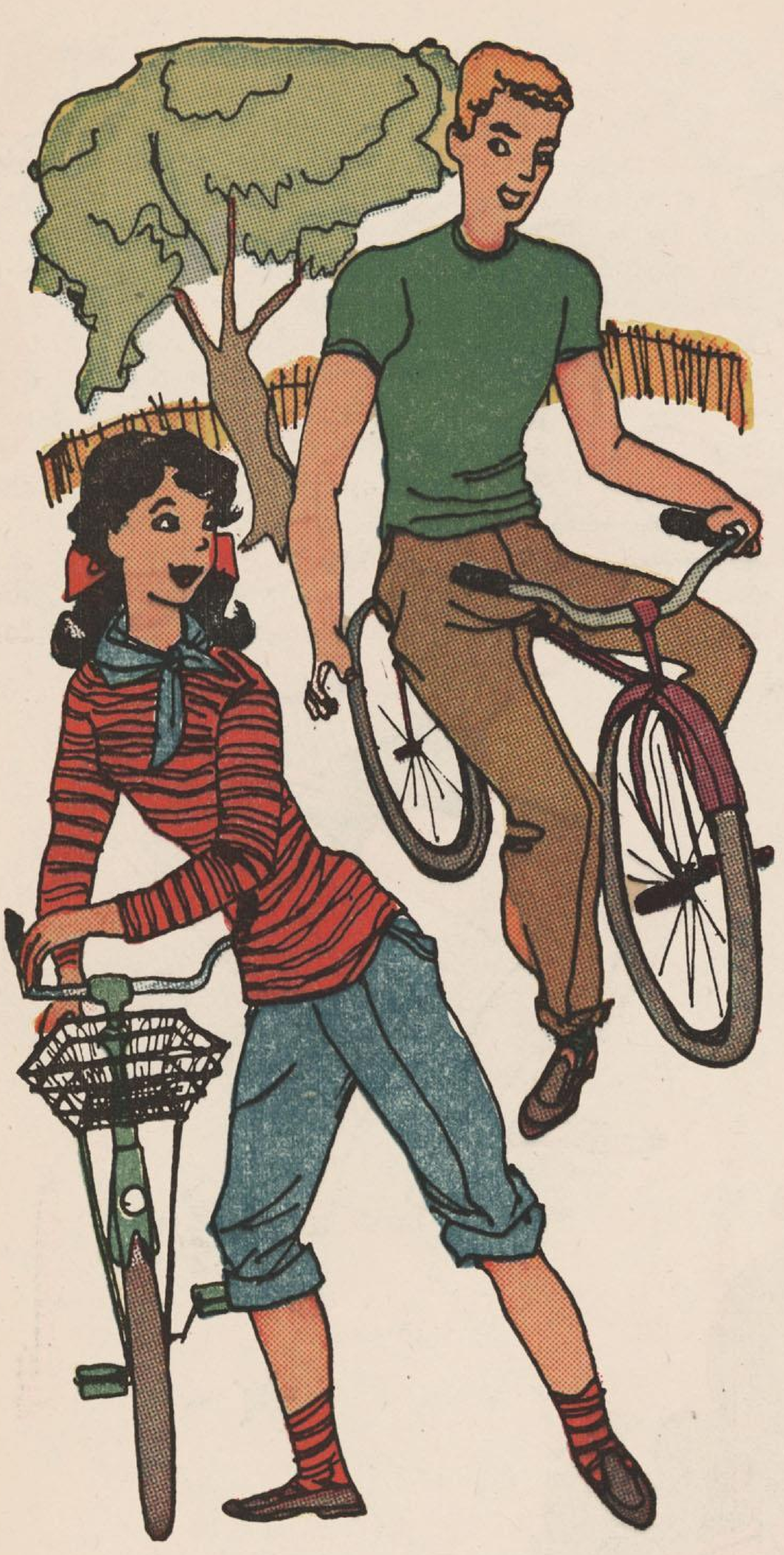
Somehow Elaine turned on a smile. "Sure," she echoed, "we'll be in the same school, and everything's been swell, so let's get on with that lesson."

They plunged into the breakers, and soon Larry was showing her the fine points of the crawl. All summer long he'd been "teaching" her things—how to ride a bicycle, how to fish, how to build a campfire properly. Or rather she'd been *letting* him "teach" her. She'd really known how to do all of these things and more, very efficiently—but from the moment she'd first seen Larry at the post office, she'd realized that now, if ever, she had to muster *all* her resources. And her past experience told her that being efficient wouldn't work.

She'd finally hit on a plan that came from, of all places, an article she remembered about "clinging vines"! For two wonderful months she'd played the part of a helpless female, catering to Larry's every masculine trait.

It had all begun so innocently. She'd noticed that every morning

Tillie Smith



"Having trouble?" Larry had asked sympathetically as he came up to her.

about eleven Larry biked to the post office to get his family's mail, and the road led right by her cottage. So she just happened to be out front one of the mornings. When she saw him approaching, she faced the other way and pretended to be trying to mount her bike.

"Having trouble?" Larry had asked sympathetically as he came up to her.

She'd looked up as if she'd never seen him before and glanced away shyly before nodding.

"Yes," she'd said sweetly in what she hoped were her best feminine tones. "My folks gave me this bike for my birthday, and I'd always thought I'd know how to ride instinctively, but somehow . . ." She let her voice trail off helplessly.

Larry grinned. "Well, if you don't mind being shown, I'm the man who can do it!"

From then on it had been smooth sailing. She'd found out that Larry was just one year older than she, that his family was settling in Kingston in the fall and had decided to come East earlier so they could spend the summer at the ocean, that he was a senior—and that he'd be in the same high school that she'd gone to for two years.

She tried not to think about school, though. Not that she had anything to be ashamed of—it was just that she was smart and quick and efficient. And somehow, somewhere along the line, things seemed to have gone off the beam. Boys seemed to be afraid of her, afraid they'd make some horrible mistake in front of her. And the girls always acted a little embarrassed when she was around while they talked about dates or their favorite jive tunes or their new clothes, as if all this were a little below her. She wanted to tell them that she liked these things, too, but their polite respect always seemed to restrain her.

So when she'd found out that Larry would be at her school, she couldn't help worrying a little. The kids would be sure to tell him about her—and then it would be over. No man liked to think that a girl could do everything he could equally well—or better. So this summer *had* to count.

It certainly seemed as if it had last Sunday when they came home from the weekly beach party. That day had been beyond even her most fanciful dreams, but—it had really happened. They hadn't talked much, had just walked hand in hand, listening to the dashing of the breakers on the shore and drinking in the mysterious world the moonlight seemed to create. When they reached her porch, they sat down on the steps—still in silence.

Finally Larry spoke. "It's pretty late, I guess."

"It seems early," Elaine murmured.

"The day went so fast . . . The summer's gone fast, too," Larry almost whispered. He cleared his throat. "Elaine . . . I, uh . . . well . . ."

"Yes?" Elaine helped.

"I . . . uh . . . oh, here!" he'd spurted out. And then he'd disappeared so fast she hardly knew he'd put something into her hand. She opened it slowly, and her heart began to do acrobatic stunts clear up to her throat. It was his pin—his class pin! And he'd given it to her! She'd thought it must be a mirage, but, before it could fade, she'd run up to her room and tried it on before her mirror. Since that minute it hadn't left her—she'd even worn it at night, pinned to her pajamas.

After today's lesson there were the usual picnic supper and sing around the campfire, and then it was time to go home. But now it wasn't anticipation that kept Elaine quietly thoughtful—she was trying to hold on to the summer as long as possible.

On the steps again Larry stared fixedly at the white moonlight on the waves. "It's been a wonderful summer," he brought out slowly.

Elaine nodded. "You've taught me so many things," she said wistfully. "I hate to see it end."

"Well," Larry pulled himself together, "it isn't as if we were saying good-by. School's almost here, and it may be even more fun than the summer's been."

Elaine was silent. Yes, it *might* be more fun—but it might not be, too.

"Guess I'd better be going." Larry stood up. He almost bent toward her, she thought, but then he hurried down the stairs. "See you in town," he called. "So long."

The muffled sounds of an answering "so long" came from Elaine as she turned and ran into the house, choking back the tears. The summer was over—there was nothing else to do but wait and hope. Once in her room she sat for a long time in front of her mirror, trying to look into the fall—and then her eyes fell on the pin. The pin! How could she keep it? Larry hadn't met anyone else from Kingston—and maybe he wouldn't want her to have it after he did. No, she couldn't just wear it back to school and have him think that she wanted all the other girls to know right from the start that he was private property. She'd take it back to him tomorrow before he left.

The next afternoon was sunny and warm, in sharp contrast to the way Elaine felt as she biked along the road to the other end of the beach. Before she rounded the bend, she noticed smoke curling up from the general location of Larry's cottage. They're burning all the things they don't want, she thought, they're going into Kingston with a fresh slate—like Larry and I will be doing, no matter what . . .

But she never finished this idea. She came onto the path that led directly to Larry's cottage and stopped dead still. The smoke wasn't coming from an incinerator at all—it was pouring in bigger and bigger puffs out of the back door and the windows. Elaine stared in horror! Where was everyone? Where was Larry?

Quickly she threw her bike down and ran toward the cottage. She had to find Larry! What else she was going to do, she didn't know. She opened the kitchen door and barged in. The smoke made her cough, and she got down on her hands and knees. She saw someone lying on the floor where the flames seemed the thickest. Every instinct told her to go in the opposite direction, but she began crawling toward the figure.

The furious tongues of fire licked at her, threatened her, warned her to turn back—she felt the stifling smoke all around her, but she kept going until she reached—it was Larry's mother! Elaine worked fast. She crawled into the living room and grabbed the scatter rugs. Back in the kitchen she wrapped them around Mrs Tompkins and dragged her outside.

The fire was still mainly in the kitchen, and, if Elaine hurried, she could get the Coast Guard firemen over here before it spread to the rest of the cottage. She'd have to call a doctor, too. But Mrs. Tompkins was trying to tell her something. Elaine bent down.

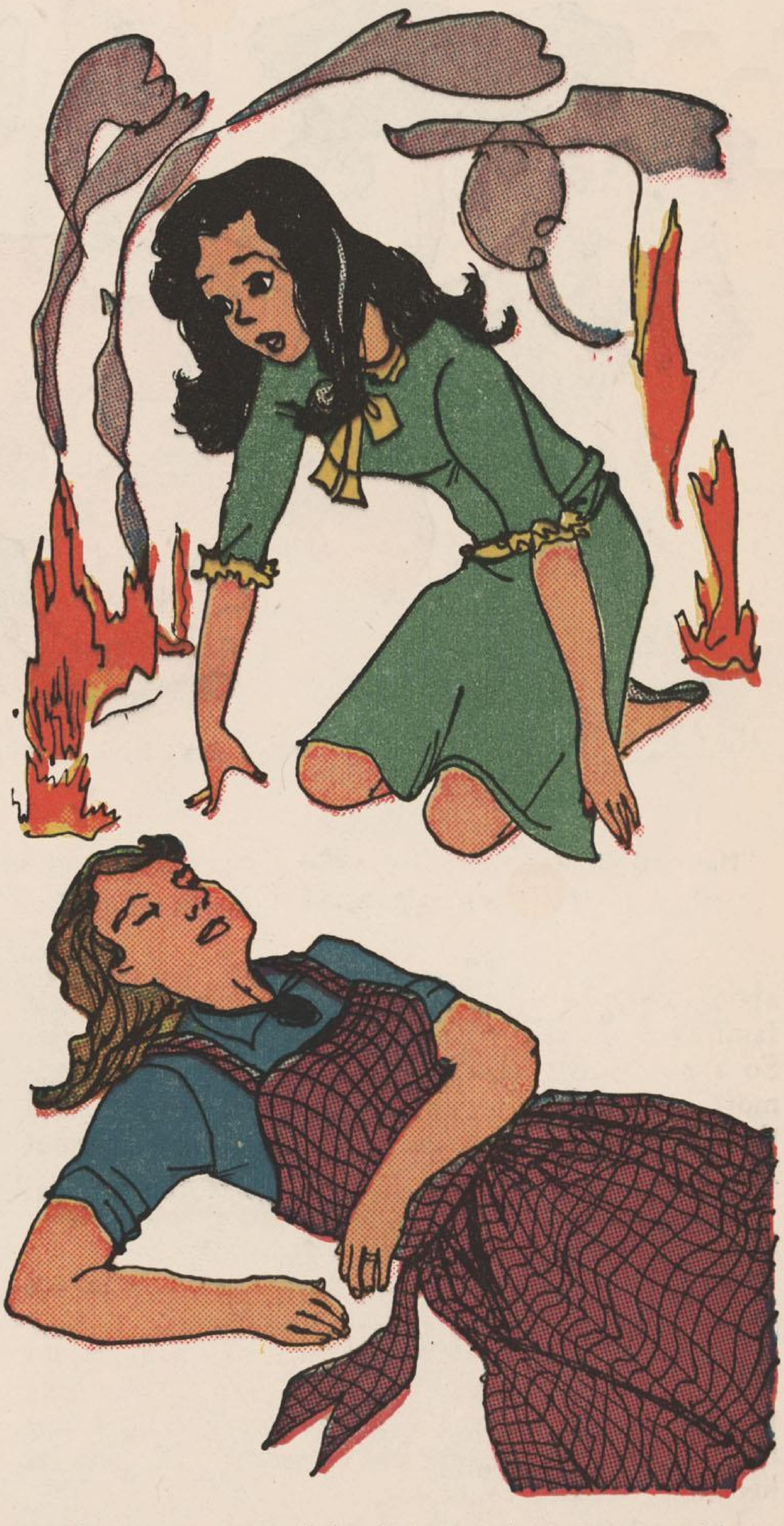
"My husband . . . in the bedroom . . . hurt . . . Get him out!"

Elaine didn't wait for more. She dashed to the front of the house, ran up the steps and back into the smoke. The bedroom opened off the living room —and, miraculously, the fire hadn't penetrated there yet. Mr. Tompkins was lying dazedly on the bed—the smoke was seeping into the room. Elaine helped him to his feet and placed one of his arms about her shoulders to support him while she led him outside.

Larry was there now, but he was just standing still, staring at the whole scene and looking stunned. Oh, why doesn't he do something? Elaine thought. If only he'd take over . . . but what difference does it make? She pushed at her straggly hair, tried to wipe the smudges off her face. Now he'd know that all her helplessness had been just an act, and she might as well make it good.

"You stay here while I get the Coast Guard," she snapped. "I'll send the firemen—and a doctor."

He watched her race away on her bike, but she didn't turn to see the expression on his face. She knew what it would be—disgust with himself for



The furious tongues of fire licked at her, threatened her, warned her to turn back.

having to take orders from a girl—and for being taken in by her.

. . . The first day of school was over. Elaine was leaving some books in her new locker near a corner of one of the long corridors when voices caught her ear.

"Oh, she's the smartest girl in the class." She recognized Janis Paine's clipped tones—Janis who concentrated on dates social rather than historical and had as good luck with them as Elaine had with the latter. "In fact, she won the soph English prize last year, and we voted her 'Most Likely to Succeed' at the annual banquet."

"Really?" came the response. Elaine knew instantly it was Larry. But she hadn't expected things to happen so soon.

"Oh, yes," Janis droned on. "Everything seems so easy for her. But how could it be? And anyhow she's always reading something or working on committees, and she never seems to be interested in dates or anything."

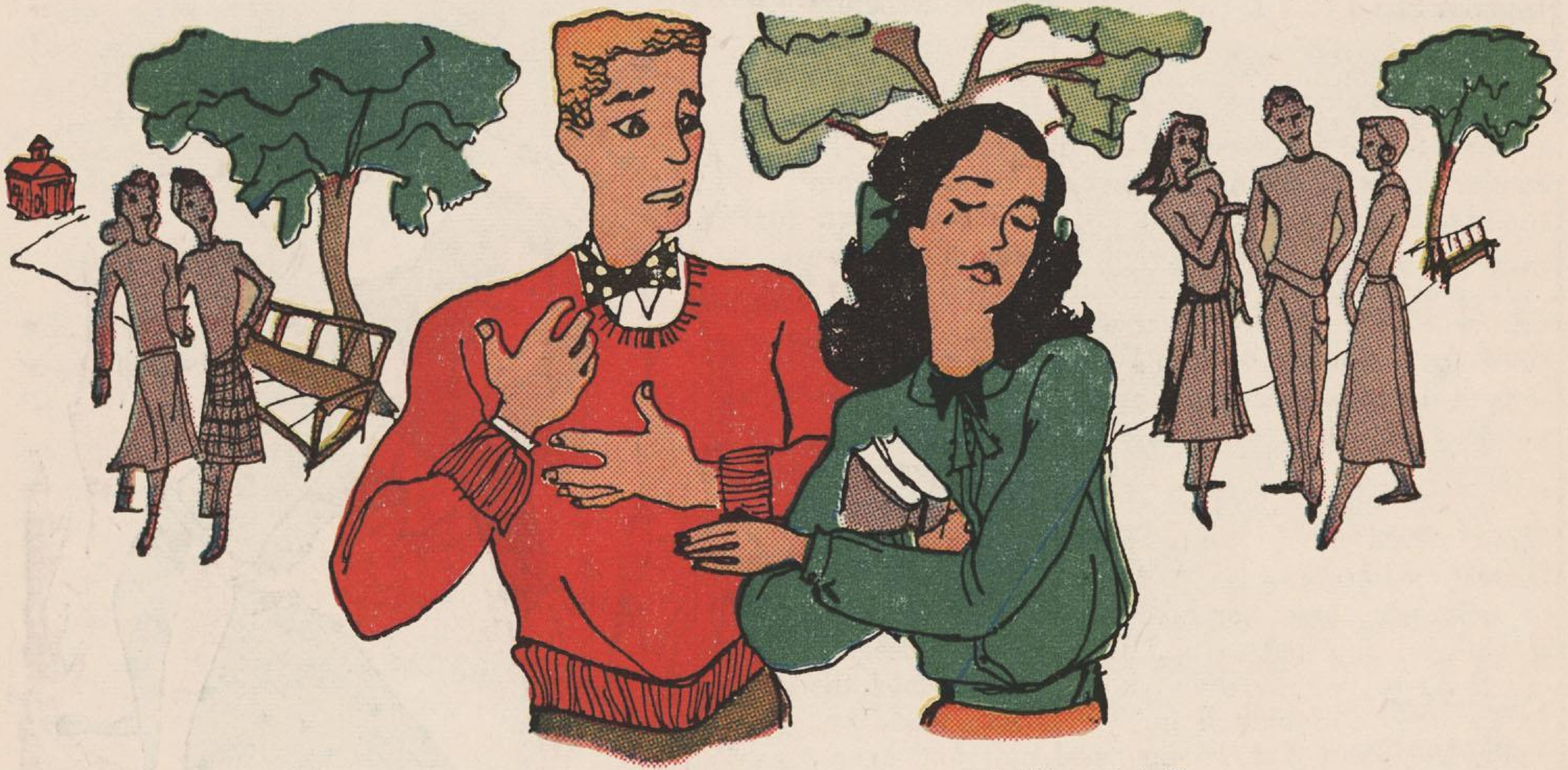
"Well, let *me* tell you something about her." Elaine didn't wait to hear more. She stumbled out the side door, tears threatening to spill any minute.

But she'd no sooner turned in the direction of her home than she heard Larry behind her.

"Elaine!" he shouted. "Elaine! Wait up!"

Well, it had to come sometime. Might as well be now. She stopped walking, opened her purse and took out the pin just as he caught up with her.

"Say, I've been trying to find you all day long," he said excitedly. "I've been wanting to ask you . . ."



"You don't have to ask," she interrupted. "Here it is."

"You don't have to ask," she interrupted. "Here it is."

She handed over the pin and left, ignoring his surprised look. He probably wanted to be the one to break it off, she thought.

But Larry was beside her again, matching his long stride to her shorter, hurried ones.

"Look, Elaine, I don't know what the trouble is, but I wanted to ask you if you'd go to the first fall dance with me."

It was Elaine's turn to look surprised.

"But . . . I heard you and Janis talking. Now you know what kind of a person I really am, I didn't think you'd want to . . ." Her voice trailed off.

"Guess you didn't hear everything," he said gruffly. "I told her how swell it was you could take over the whole situation at the cottage. I was away, you know, getting the last mail. Pop had fallen down the cellar steps while he was going to get some more stuff to burn, and after Mom had helped him onto the bed, she'd begun to heat some water for his leg and accidentally threw the match into a basket of trash before it was out. It fell onto some greasy rags—and I guess she just fainted from all the excitement."

"Well, what else could I do?" Elaine put in. "Someone had to do something. And I thought you might be—" At the look on his face, she stopped.

"May I continue?" Larry grinned. "And I told Janis how much fun it was teaching you all those things—even if you knew how to do them already. You learned pretty fast for such a helpless girl, you know. And anyhow what do you think I was teaching you for if I didn't want you to do them *with* me?"

Elaine couldn't help smiling. And both of them began walking home. Maybe that article on "clinging vines" had been right—and maybe it hadn't. Who cared? After Larry left her at her door, she was more efficient than ever in making sure that the pin got *exactly* into its proper position. **THE END**

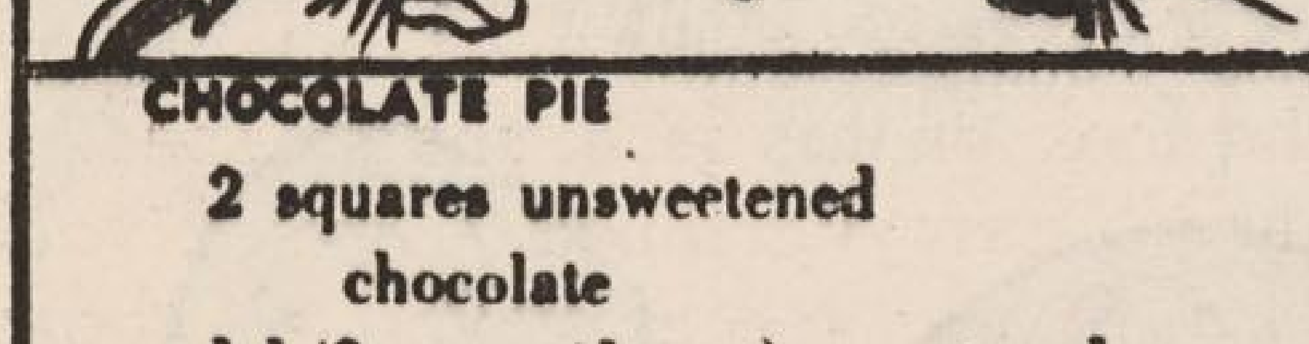
FOOD
FOR
FUN

MUSHROOM MUST . . .

For luncheon, or even a brunch party, how about big mushroom caps stuffed with shrimp and a luscious sauce?

Get the largest mushroom caps you can find—say 6 of them. Brush them and broil them on a buttered broiler rack, exposing top side first. After five minutes, turn the mushrooms and pop a bit of butter inside each cap. Broil four minutes more.

In a saucepan make a sauce by blending 3 tablespoons of olive oil or butter with 4 tablespoons flour and adding, when it bubbles, 2 cups fish stock or clam broth, salt and pepper. Bring to a boil, then lower heat and simmer for five minutes. Add 1 cup chopped cooked shrimp and let heat through together. Fill the mushroom caps with the mixture, rounding well on top. Arrange the caps on rounds of sauteed bread and pour any remaining sauce over all. Serve very hot.



CHOCOLATE PIE

2 squares unsweetened chocolate
1-1/3 cups (1 can) sweetened condensed milk
½ cup water
Baked pie shell (8-inch)

Melt chocolate in top of double boiler. Add sweetened condensed milk, stirring over boiling water 5 minutes until mixture thickens. Add water, stir until thoroughly blended. Pour into baked pie shell. Garnish with whipped cream if desired. Chill.

SALMON SEND-OFF . . .

Worthy of the fanciest supper party is this cinch-to-prepare cold boiled salmon with a green-tinted cucumber mayonnaise.

Get a 3 pound piece of salmon, whole. Wrap the piece in a square of cheesecloth and plunge it into boiling court bouillon. After 5 minutes, reduce the boiling to a mere simmer and cook slowly until fish just starts to fall away from the bone. You can allow 10 minutes per pound.

Remove the fish to a dish, take off cheesecloth carefully and peel off skin. Sprinkle fish with lemon juice, rewrap firmly in cloth and set to chill. When ready to serve, unwrap, put on platter and garnish with lemon wedges and parsley. Serve with mayonnaise to which chopped cucumber and a little green coloring have been added.

SCRUMPTIOUS SQUAB . . .

If you're feeling in a dinner party mood, and hang the expense, treat your guests to boned stuffed squab.

Get the poultry man to bone 1 squab per person for you. You can do it yourself, but probably not half as quickly or as neatly. Stuff each squab with a tablespoon of liver pate, and bake until done in butter or chicken fat, basting often.

Now let the squabs cool. Then arrange them on a serving platter, and coat them with brown gravy from the pan. Set in icebox to cool. Serve very cold, garnished with seedless grapes and cherries.

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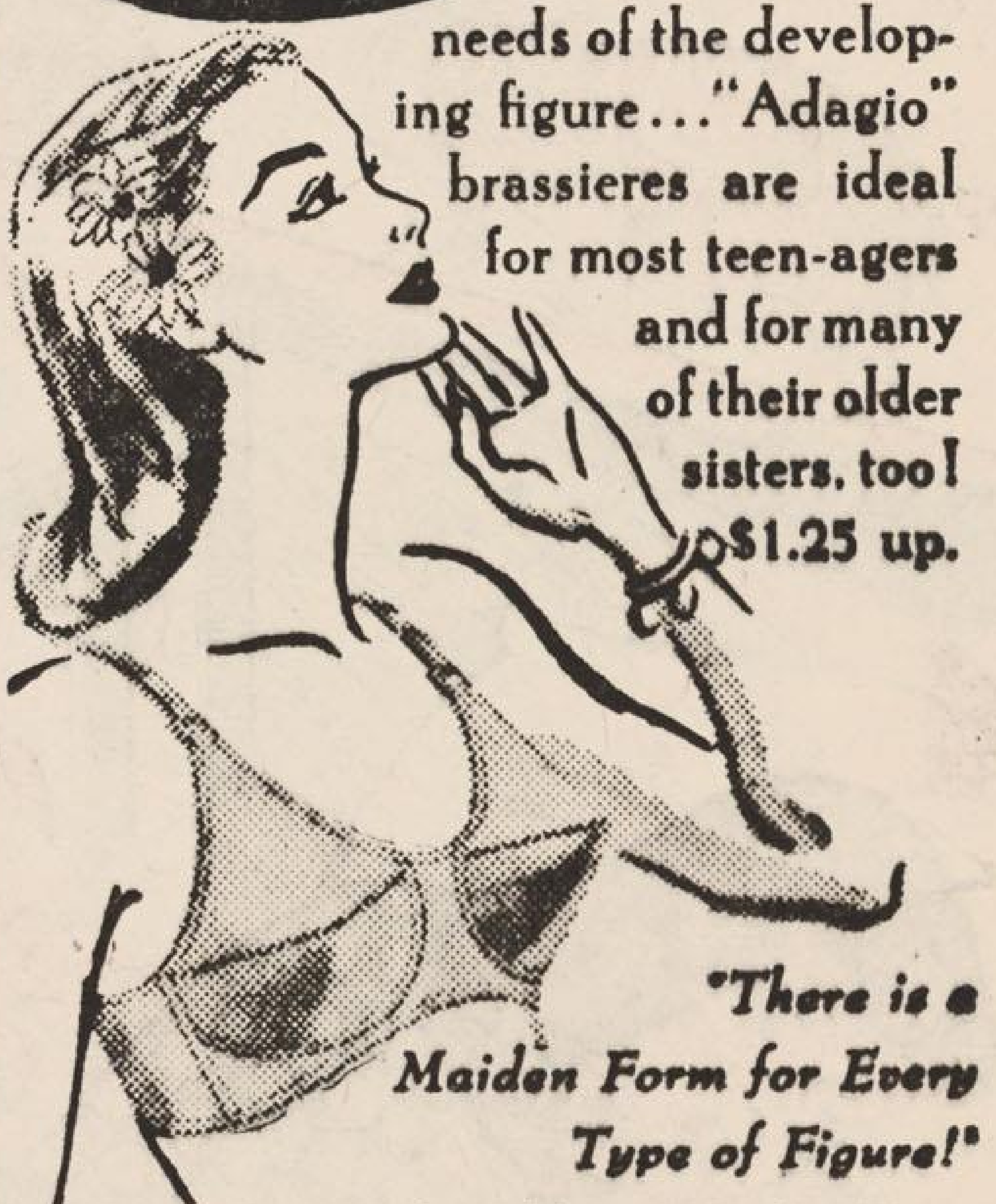

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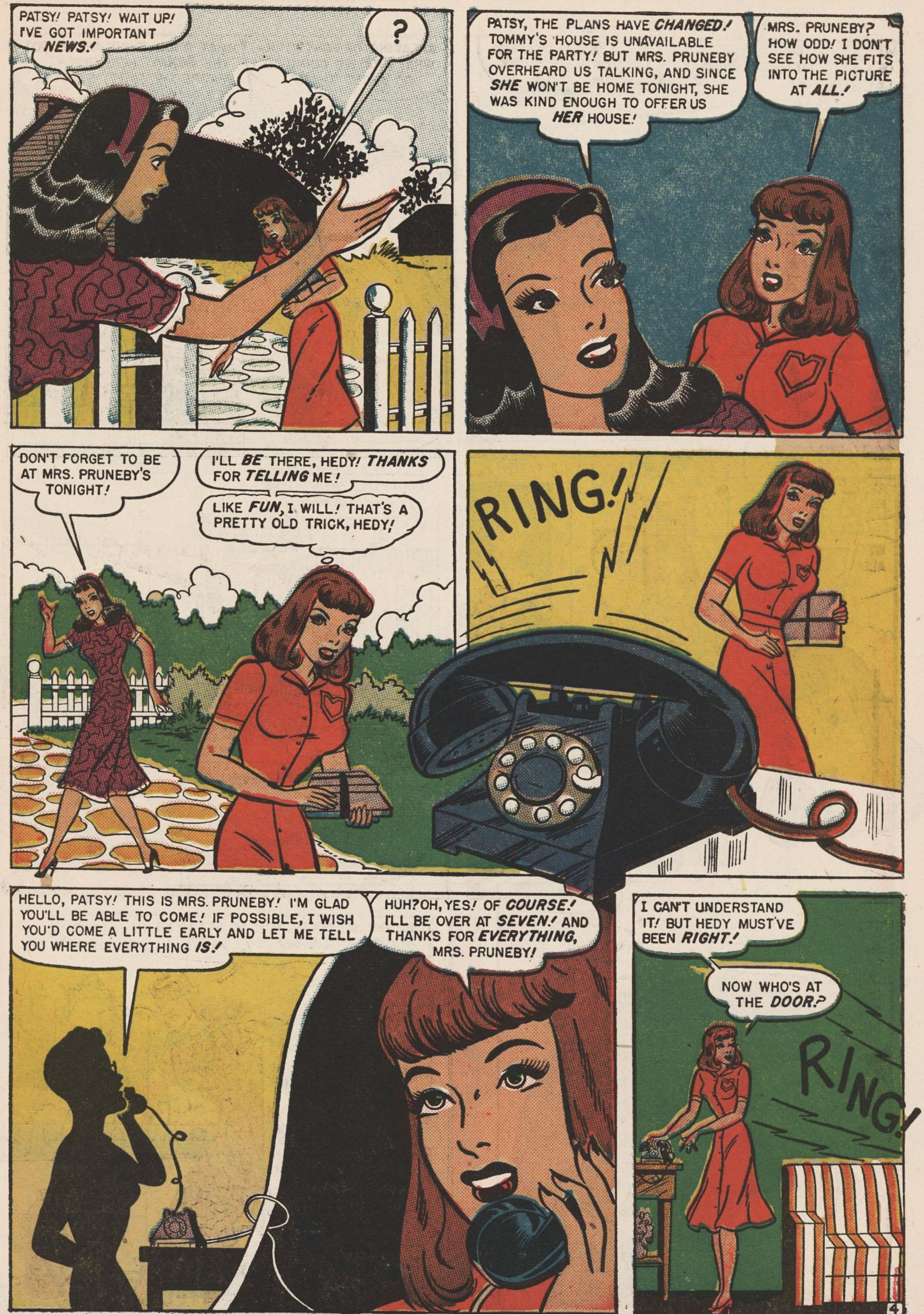
PATSY WALKER
MISS AMERICA
JAFFEE CANDY BARS
"OH, BABY!"
WELL, PATSY, WHAT'S ALL THE SECRETIVE PLANNING ABOUT?
YEAH, SPEAK UP! I'M ALL EARS! HAH!
WELL, IT'S BUZZ'S BIRTHDAY TODAY AND WE WANT TO HAVE A SURPRISE PARTY FOR HIM!
THE ONLY TROUBLE IS THAT WE CAN'T FIND ANY PLACE TO HAVE IT IN!
1

HOW ABOUT MY HOUSE? I'M PRETTY SURE THAT'LL BE OKAY WITH MY FOLKS!
SWELL, TOMMY!
PSST... PATSY! HERE COMES BUZZ!
SHH...NOT A WORD! YOU KIDS GO ON WITH THE PLANS AND I'LL TAKE BUZZ AWAY!
HI, GANG! WHAT'S UP?
OH-ER, NOTHING! I MEAN, YOU'RE JUST IN TIME, BUZZ! I NEED A BIG, STRONG, HANDSOME MAN TO CARRY THESE HEAVY BOOKS FOR ME!
I CAN SEE WHERE I WOULDN'T HAVE MUCH FUN AT A PARTY WHERE PATSY IS PRESENT! BUT IF PATSY WERE NOT PRESENT—WELL, THINGS WOULD BE A LOT DIFFERENT! I'VE GOT TO THINK FAST!
SAY, ISN'T THAT MRS. PRUNEBY COMING TOWARD US?
YEAH, I WONDER WHAT SHE WANTS!
HELLO, THERE! I'VE COME TO ASK A FAVOR! I HAVE TO ATTEND A VERY IMPORTANT PARENT-TEACHER'S MEETING TONIGHT AND I AM DESPERATELY IN NEED OF A BABY SITTER! CAN ANY OF YOU HELP ME?
SORRY, I'M BUSY TONIGHT, MRS. PRUNEBY!
ME, TOO!
I CAN'T MAKE IT EITHER!

WELL, IF ANY OF YOU HEARS OF A BABY SITTER, *PLEASE* LET ME KNOW!
OH, YEAH? HMMPH! AFTER THE LOAD OF *HOMEWORK* SHE GAVE US, *I* SURE WOULDN'T DO *HER* ANY FAVORS!
SPEAKING OF HOMEWORK– WHAT *ARE* WE GOING TO DO ABOUT THAT?
WHAT D'YOU THINK WE'VE GOT "THE *BRAIN*" HERE FOR? BEFORE THE PARTY STARTS, HE'S GOING TO HELP US GET *THAT* OUT OF THE WAY!
AHEM!
HMM... THIS IS MY CHANCE TO FIX PATSY UP *GOOD!*
WELL, I'LL BE RUNNING ALONG NOW! SEE YOU LATER, KIDS!
S'LONG, HEDY!
OH, MRS. PRUNEBY, MAY I SEE YOU A MOMENT?
WHY, OF COURSE, HEDY! WHAT *IS* IT?
I SPOKE TO PATSY AND SHE AGREED TO BE YOUR BABY SITTER! BUT OF *COURSE*, SHE INSISTED ON BEING WELL-*PAID!* SHE SAID FOR *MONEY*, SHE'D SIT WITH *ANY BRAT!*
BRAT!!? WELL, I *MUST* SAY I DON'T CARE FOR HER *ATTITUDE!* BUT I'M DESPERATE, SO I GUESS I'LL *HAVE* TO CALL HER UP ABOUT IT!
SO FAR, SO GOOD! NOW TO GET OVER TO PATSY'S BEFORE MRS. P. CAN *CALL* HER!
3


PATSY! PATSY! WAIT UP! I'VE GOT IMPORTANT NEWS!
?
PATSY, THE PLANS HAVE CHANGED! TOMMY'S HOUSE IS UNAVAILABLE FOR THE PARTY! BUT MRS. PRUNEBY OVERHEARD US TALKING, AND SINCE SHE WON'T BE HOME TONIGHT, SHE WAS KIND ENOUGH TO OFFER US HER HOUSE!
MRS. PRUNEBY? HOW ODD! I DON'T SEE HOW SHE FITS INTO THE PICTURE AT ALL!
DON'T FORGET TO BE AT MRS. PRUNEBY'S TONIGHT!
I'LL BE THERE, HEDY! THANKS FOR TELLING ME!
LIKE FUN, I WILL! THAT'S A PRETTY OLD TRICK, HEDY!
RING!
HELLO, PATSY! THIS IS MRS. PRUNEBY! I'M GLAD YOU'LL BE ABLE TO COME! IF POSSIBLE, I WISH YOU'D COME A LITTLE EARLY AND LET ME TELL YOU WHERE EVERYTHING IS!
HUH? OH, YES! OF COURSE! I'LL BE OVER AT SEVEN! AND THANKS FOR EVERYTHING, MRS. PRUNEBY!
I CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT! BUT HEDY MUST'VE BEEN RIGHT!
NOW WHO'S AT THE DOOR?
RING!
4

HELLO, NANCY! SAY, WHY THE LONG, SAD FACE?
OH, PATSY! EVERYTHING'S ALL WRONG—WE CAN'T HAVE TOMMY'S HOUSE TONIGHT! NOW WHAT'LL WE DO?
HAVEN'T YOU HEARD, NANCY? THE PARTY IS GOING TO BE AT MRS. PRUNEBY'S HOUSE! SHE JUST CALLED TO TELL ME THAT HEDY MADE THE ARRANGEMENTS!
HEDY? WELL, AT LAST SHE DID SOMETHING NICE! I'LL TELL THE GANG ABOUT IT!
FINE! I'VE GOT TO GET OVER TO MRS. PRUNEBY'S EARLY AND I'D BETTER START GETTING DRESSED NOW!
WELL, HERE I AM, MRS. PRUNEBY!
OH, COME IN, PATSY!
EVERYTHING'S CLEAN AND READY! I'M SURE YOU'LL FIND OUR LIVING ROOM COMFORTABLE!
OH, I'M SURE WE WILL!
WE? OH, I SEE WHAT YOU MEAN—YOU AND THE BABY! OF COURSE! NOW LET ME SHOW YOU WHERE THE FOOD IS!
BABY???
OH, YES! THE FOOD!
HERE IT IS—ONE BOTTLE AT 8:00 O'CLOCK, AND SOME CARROTS AND SPINACH! AFTER THAT HE SLEEPS LIKE A LOG!
IS THAT THE FOOD? B-BUT-B-BUT I THOUGHT, THAT IS, I-I-I MEAN---- WHAT ABOUT THE PARTY?????
5

PARTY?? I'M SURE I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT, PATSY! HOWEVER, I DO HOPE YOU KNOW THE DUTIES OF A BABY SITTER!!
BABY SITTER? OH, I-I'M A B-BABY S-SITTER!
AND WITH NO ONE TO DISTURB YOU, I'M SURE YOU'LL HAVE AMPLE TIME TO DO YOUR HOMEWORK AND GET A GOOD GRADE IN SCHOOL TOMORROW! GOOD NIGHT, PATSY!
Y-YES! G-GOOD NIGHT, MRS. PRUNEBY!
I'VE BEEN TRICKED BY HEDY AGAIN (SNIFF)! SHE PLANNED ALL THIS, AND EVEN NOW, I'LL BET SHE'S GOT THE GANG OVER AT HER HOUSE! OH, THIS IS AWFUL (SNIFF)!
HEY, PAT! WHERE ARE YOU?
?
NANCY! TOMMY! EVERYBODY! OH, THIS IS A SURPRISE PARTY!
WHAT'D YOU EXPECT? SAY, BUZZ ISN'T HERE YET, IS HE?
NO...BUT-BUT-
GOOD! WE TOLD HIM TO COME HERE BECAUSE MRS. PRUNESBY WANTED TO SEE HIM ABOUT HIS SCHOOL WORK!
AND NOW-BEFORE THE FESTIVITIES BEGIN, WE MUST GET OUR HOMEWORK DONE! "THE BRAIN" WILL SUPERVISE, AND SOMEBODY MAKE AN EXTRA COPY FOR BUZZ!
AT YOUR SERVICE, GANG!
YEA!
H'RAY!
BRAVO!
6

MEANWHILE...
HOW PERFECTLY EVERYTHING HAS WORKED OUT! I'LL HAVE BUZZ ALL TO MYSELF NOW WHILE PATSY LANGUISHES AWAY BABY SITTING!
AH... HERE'S TOMMY'S HOUSE AND IT'S ALL LIT UP! BUZZ IS PROBABLY THERE BY NOW!
AND INSIDE TOMMY'S HOUSE...
I'M GLAD TO ADDRESS THIS P.T.A. MEETING! THE FIRST THING I WISH TO REPORT IS THAT I'M PROUD OF MY STUDENTS! - I THINK THEY HAVE BECOME MORE SETTLED AND MATURE! I WATCH THEM CLOSELY AND, THEREFORE, FEEL QUALIFIED TO...
YIPPEE! SURPRISE! SURPRISE!
?
?
?
?
?
?
SLAM!
THE STUDENTS ARE CERTAINLY MORE SETTLED! HA, HA!
MORE MATURE! HA, HA HA!
MORE REFINED, TOO, I SUPPOSE! HA, HA, HA!
HA! HA! HA! HAA! HA! HA!
?
I'VE NEVER BEEN MORE EMBARRASSED IN ALL MY LIFE.... OHHHH!
7

MEANWHILE AT THE PRUNEBY HOUSE...
HAPPY BIRTHDAY, DEAR *BUZZ*— HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU!♪
AND SO, AFTER AN EVENING OF GRAND FUN FOR ALL
THIS HAS BEEN THE SWELLEST SURPRISE OF MY LIFE! CAN I TAKE YOU HOME NOW, PATSY?
OH-ER-NO, BUZZ! I'VE GOT TO WAIT FOR MRS. PRUNEBY!
AND CLEAN UP THE PLACE LIKE *MAD!*
WHEW! FINISHED AT LAST! AND—OH, NOT A MOMENT TOO *SOON!* I HEAR THE PRUNEBYS COMING!
HELLO, PATSY! MY, EVERYTHING LOOKS JUST LIKE WE LEFT IT! WAS THE BABY ANY TROUBLE?
OH, NO, MRS. PRUNEBY! HE SLEPT RIGHT THROUGH!
I HAD A *DREADFUL* TIME! JUST AS I WAS MAKING AN IMPORTANT SPEECH, HEDY WOLFE BURST IN AND RUINED *EVERYTHING!* I COULD JUST *STRANGLE* THAT GIRL! NOW I SUPPOSE YOU WANT YOUR PAY! HOW MUCH DO I *OWE* YOU?
NOT A THING, MRS. PRUNEBY! I ENJOYED BEING HERE-ER, *MORE* THAN I CAN *TELL* YOU!
WHY, PATSY, THAT'S *SWEET* OF YOU! AND DO YOU KNOW THAT HEDY TOLD ME YOU WERE ONLY DOING THIS FOR THE *MONEY?* OH, THAT *GIRL!*
8
NEXT DAY...
AND FURTHERMORE, MISS WOLFE, IT SEEMS YOURS IS THE ONLY HOMEWORK I CAN'T GIVE A PASSING GRADE! IF YOU HAD STAYED HOME AND STUDIED LIKE PATSY AND THE OTHERS, INSTEAD OF MAKING A *FOOL* OF YOURSELF AT THE *P.T.A. MEETING*, PERHAPS THINGS MIGHT HAVE BEEN *DIFFERENT!*
THE END

A HEART TO HEART AFFAIR

By RUTH BRANDAO FERRARI

SOMETIMES PARENTS HAVE TO BE SHOWN THAT YOU'RE GROWING UP. BUT HOW? PEGGY KNEW ONLY THAT SHE HAD TO SOLVE THIS PROBLEM BY HERSELF.

PEGGY dutifully kissed her mother good-by. Mrs. Farrell flashed her beautiful smile. "I know you'll be going to the sorority dinner, darling, but what will you do between three o'clock and dinner time? Are you coming home to dress?"

"Oh, no, Mother, nobody dresses for the rush dinners. Tony said he'd meet me at school and we'd go to the College Inn and dance awhile. That's if it's all right with you."

"Of course it is, darling. I'll send Pierce for you after the dinner."

Peggy sighed as she stepped out onto the street. She had a long wait for the bus and it gave her too much time to think. Most of the juniors at Miss Miller's School were wildly excited today. The sorority dinners tonight marked the close of rush week. Every girl invited to one of them knew that she would be chosen as a sorority member, and the invitations would be given out this afternoon after the members had their last meetings at lunch time. Peggy already knew that the Zetas had chosen her, and the Zetas were the very tops. The other three sororities had rushed her, too, but she'd let it be known she'd go Zeta so there'd only be one dinner invitation—the most coveted one. She should have been thrilled to death. But she had something more important on her mind.

If only Mother would realize that seventeen was practically grown up and would let her go alone with Tony in his jalopy to his frat dance tomorrow night! It was so important to him. He'd built the jalopy out of scraps and ingenuity. Only the final touches had to be put on tomorrow, Saturday, and he did so want to take her to the dance in it the first time he used it.

But Mother said no. Not that she didn't trust Tony or the jalopy, but just because she thought Peggy was too young to go out alone with a boy at night. Pierce, the chauffeur, always had to drive Peggy and her dates to parties and wait to take them home afterwards. Tony was sweet about it, of course, but he'd shown his disappointment this time. And she hated to disappoint Tony almost as much as she hated to argue with Mother.

Argue with Mother? She'd never really tried, but rebelliously she wished she could, as other girls did. She wished she could throw a real temper tantrum just once. But of course that was out of the question.

When Peggy was a little girl, her mother had become ill and had remained a semi-invalid for ten years. Mr. Farrell had taught her that Mother must never be disturbed, that Peggy must always be agreeable even when she didn't feel like it. It was for Mother's good, and Peggy adored Mother.

Mother was quite well now, and Peggy still adored her. Mr. Farrell left all decisions about raising their daughter to his wife, and Peggy knew that her mother was always right — or *almost* always. She *wasn't* right about going out with Tony alone—she couldn't be. But Peggy didn't know how to get the idea across. Mother was so charming, so gracious and infallibly polite that Peggy had to be polite, too, even when she felt like throwing things.

At school all the juniors were in a daze so nobody noticed Peggy's particular daze. Miss Miller had long fought against having sororities in her school, but a few years ago had yielded to the girls and admitted them. However, only juniors and seniors could join, and if there was to be one sorority on the campus there must be four. The idea was that there should be enough to go around so that no girl's feelings would be hurt. And so far it had worked out that way. Miss Miller's School had only twenty girls in each class, and by her junior year each girl had enough friends to get at least one sorority bid. Of course, everyone didn't always get the bid she preferred, but nobody had ever been left out completely.

At noon the seniors disappeared into the sorority rooms adjoining the campus, and the juniors broke up into little groups designated by the sororities they hoped to pledge. But one junior didn't join any group. Aletha Parker sat alone under a tree on the campus. Peggy had met Aletha last week when school started and had liked her. Vaguely she'd heard some gossip, but Peggy had her mother's habit of never listening to gossip. Her thoughts had been on Tony and his jalopy while the other girls chattered.

But now she noticed the lonely curve of Aletha's shoulders as she sat there. She was a pretty girl with lovely black hair and brown eyes and a full red mouth that was made to smile but which didn't seem to smile very much.

Evelyn Sanders was whispering in Peggy's ear. "It's too bad about Aletha. I guess she'll be the only one in the class not to get a bid. But her aunt should have had more sense than to send her to a school like this. She was bound to be snubbed."

Peggy stared at Evelyn. She remembered how her mother had squelched Aunt Mary one time on the subject of Evelyn Sanders. Aunt Mary had referred to the Sanders family as "newly rich" and wondered what Miss Miller's School was coming to to take such a girl.

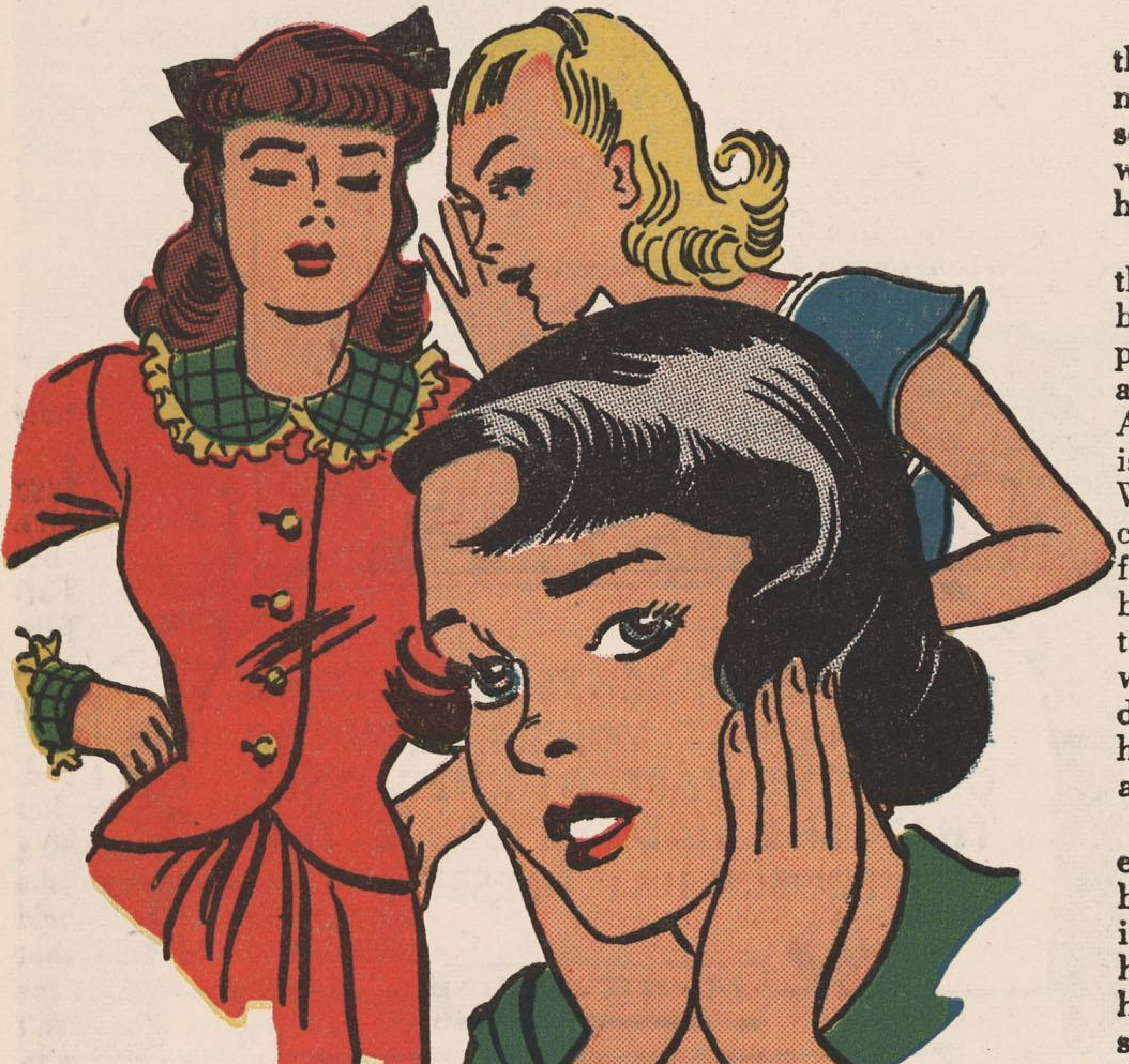
"What's the matter with Aletha?" Peggy asked. "I think she's nice. Is it because she just started school this fall? So did Faye Maxwell, and the Chi's are rushing her."

"Peggy, you're so dumb! Aletha's father was charged with embezzlement. They lived in Memphis, and when her father was accused her mother's sister invited Aletha to live here while the case is decided. She's Mrs. William Worthington. You know her, of course. Well, she rates, and she forced Miss Miller to take Aletha, but she can't force the sororities to rush her. Why, my mother wouldn't let me have anything to do with Aletha. Everybody knows her father . . . Why, Peggy, where are you going?"

Peggy didn't answer. She crossed the yard and dropped down beside Aletha. She was angry, but it didn't show in her smile. Had her father been watching, he'd have proudly recognized his wife's smile. "How do you like our town, Aletha?" she began.

Aletha looked startled. Then her pretty mouth curved bitterly. "Better than it likes me, I imagine."

"Why, it doesn't even know you yet."



Evelyn Sanders was whispering in Peggy's ear. "It's too bad about Aletha."

The girl smiled suddenly. "You're nice, but don't try to fool me. Do you suppose I'm blind? Naturally I know I'm the only girl in this class who didn't get a single rush. All the sororities rushed you, didn't they? Oh, I wish Aunt Sue would let me leave and go to public school!"

Peggy took her hand. "You'll like Miss Miller's when you get used to it. And the sororities are just a lot of nonsense."

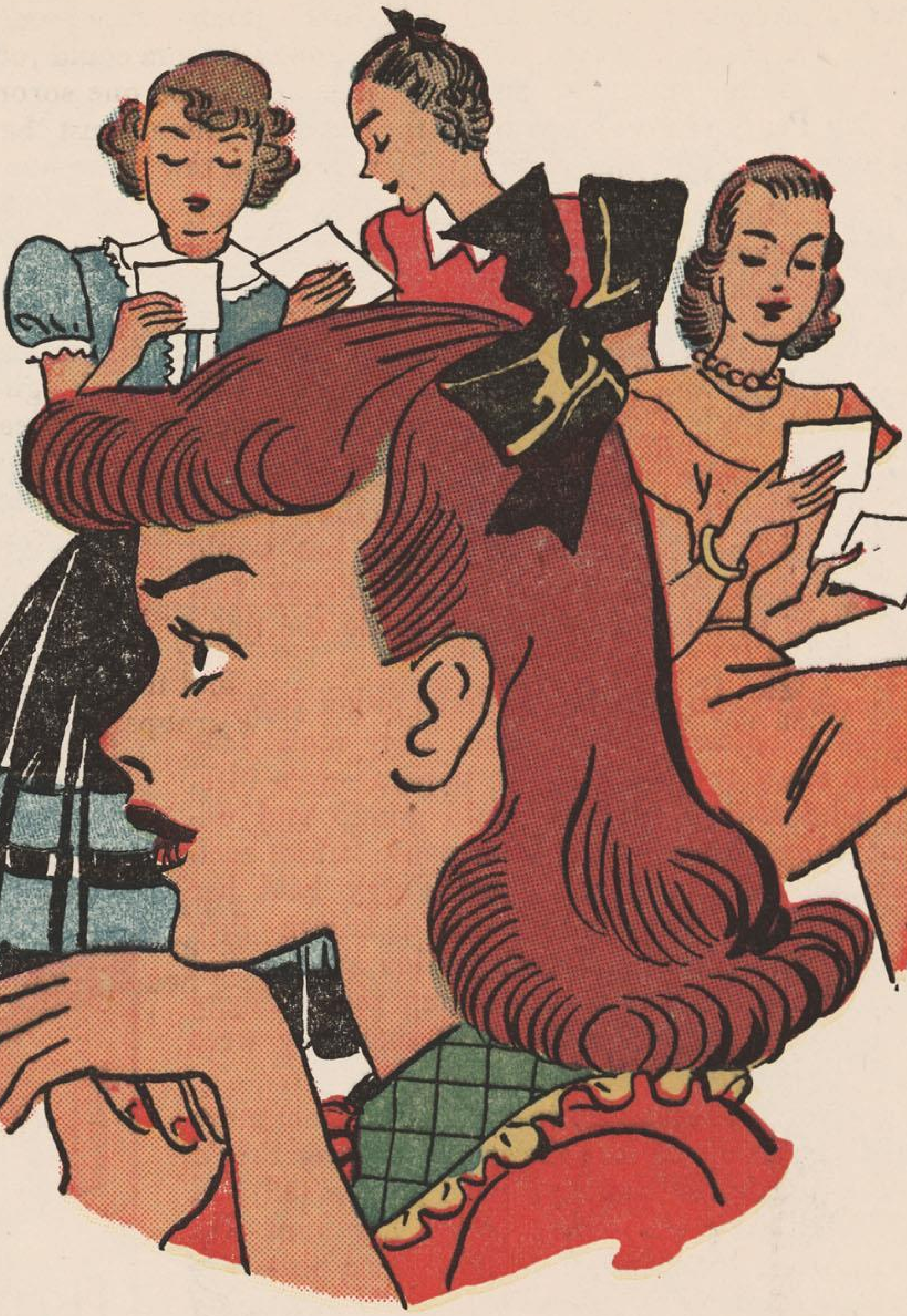
"Yes, but you'll join one. You can call them nonsense and not care about them because you'll be inside. When you're on the outside—well, it's hard not to care. Tonight when you're all at the dinners . . ." Her voice broke.

Peggy hardly realized she'd made up her mind before she was saying the words, "I won't go to the dinner if you'll come home with me instead."

Aletha gaped at her. "But, Peggy, if you don't go, you don't get a bid! Even *I* know that."

Peggy shrugged. "What's the difference? I tell you they're a lot of nonsense and I mean it. Meet me right here at three o'clock, will you?"

Aletha nodded blankly as the bell rang. In the upstairs hall a Zeta handed Peggy an invitation to the dinner, but Peggy had her answer ready. "I'm sorry, May, but I can't come tonight."



Maybe she'd feel alone this way all the rest of the time she was in high school.

On May's exclamation she left immediately. The Zetas would think she'd decided to accept another bid, and they wouldn't like it. But by tomorrow they'd know that Peggy Farrell hadn't taken *any* bid. Soon it would be whispered about the campus that she hadn't gotten any bid, and it would be literally true. Any girl who didn't attend a dinner tonight wouldn't get a formal bid.

She raised her small chin defiantly. She didn't care. It would be better for two girls in the junior class to be outside than only one. She'd meant it when she said sororities were nonsense — they were worse than that when they hurt a girl's feelings. But she felt curiously alone in classes that afternoon as the other girls stealthily showed each other their invitations. Maybe she'd feel alone this way all the rest of the time she was in high school, left out of things. Then she looked across the room and met Aletha's grateful smile. No, Peggy Farrell wasn't sorry. But it was just a little hard not to be.

Tony had Bob Barnes with him when he met her that afternoon. He usually did, but she was especially glad this time. She introduced the boys to Aletha, and they paired off on the way to the College Inn. "Aletha's swell, really, Tony," Peggy whispered, "and nobody's been nice to her at school. Do you suppose you could get Bob to date her for the dance tomorrow night and have them go with us?"

He smiled down at her. "I guess so. Bob doesn't have a date—he's always too lazy to make one. But he's a good-natured sort." Then he hesitated. "You heard about Aletha's father, I suppose. Will your mother mind your being friendly with her?"

It was a question which Peggy didn't know how to answer. Mrs. Farrell had never discussed it. But it was well-known that the Farrells were the first family of Hillsdale, and her mother might think Peggy shouldn't associate with the daughter of a suspected man.

Peggy wavered only a second. She'd always deferred to her mother's opinions, but something told her this was a question she had to decide for herself, and she'd already decided it. Her chin shot up again. "Mother's always let me choose my own friends. She hasn't met Aletha yet, but I'm going to take her home to dinner. And you fix up that double date for tomorrow."

Tony knew about the sorority dinners, but he didn't mention them. He only smiled at her. It was his usual tender smile, but there was something new in it. Admiration—but there'd always been admiration. This was something special. It made Peggy feel warm and happy right down to her saddle shoes.

She phoned home from the College Inn and told her mother she was bringing a friend to dinner. "You'll be welcome, of course, dear, but aren't you going to the Zeta affair?"

"No, Mother, I don't want to."

There was a pause, but Mrs. Farrell asked no questions. Peggy said good-by and hung up.

Bob liked Aletha, and they were all very gay that afternoon. But there were misgivings under Peggy's gaiety. She hadn't told her mother Aletha's name. Her mother would be polite, of course, but would she be pleased? Well, if she wasn't, Peggy just couldn't help it. She knew she had to do the thing she was doing.

. . . Nervously she introduced Aletha to her parents. The name registered, she realized. They must have heard the story or read it in the papers—even Mrs. Farrell who always tried to avoid gossip and unpleasant things. There was a brief pause before each of them took Aletha's hand, and Peggy held her breath. But they were polite—she'd known they would be. And when Mrs. Farrell put her arm around Aletha and led the way to the dining room, Peggy realized with a grateful little thrill that they were going to be a great deal more than that.

They were. She had never seen either of them more cordial to anybody. Before the meal was over they'd planned a picnic for Sunday, and Mrs. Farrell had asked Aletha why she didn't phone her aunt and ask permission to spend the night since this was Friday and there was no school in the morning. Maybe Pierce could drive them out to the farm next morning and they could ride a couple of the horses. And then Aletha called her aunt and found out that her mother had just phoned. They'd arrested the real criminal and her father was completely cleared!

Oh, it was wonderful! Aletha looked so happy, and Peggy was happy enough to burst. She'd almost forgotten the Zeta dinner. It just didn't matter at all.

Tony and Bob dropped in later, and they danced to the radio and drank sodas. The girls at the Zeta dinner would still be putting their best feet forward, all a little nervous and strained. Nobody was strained or nervous at the Farrells'. It was heavenly.

She and Aletha were turning into Peggy's bedroom when her father called Peggy from the room across the hall. She excused herself and went in. Her mother was sitting up in bed, her father smiling as he closed the door behind Peggy.

Mrs. Farrell held out her arms, and Peggy rushed into them. "Darling," her mother was saying, "your father and I have had a talk, and we've decided you're right. You're quite old enough to go to a dance alone with Tony in his jalopy tomorrow night if you want to. In fact, darling, you're quite grown up, beautifully grown up. You'll never know how proud we were of you tonight."

Her eyes misty, Peggy turned to her father. He was hemming and hawing and looking slightly embarrassed. He'd never liked any kind of scene, even nice ones. She asked wonderingly, "But why—how—?"

Mrs. Farrell only smiled. It was Dad who answered in spite of his embarrassment, "When a girl's old enough to make a big decision without any prodding and she makes the right one, well, she's not a child even if she *is* only seventeen. Go to bed, dear, but remember—if that jalopy breaks down, you're not to call for Pierce. You two can walk home—you're on your own now."

"Not two—there'll be four of us. Aletha and Bob, too. And I guess we could push the jalopy if we had to!"

As she crossed the hall Peggy felt that she could have pushed the jalopy all alone! She'd never felt so strong in her life. She gave a fleeting thought to the sororities at school. No, she wouldn't feel alone or left out in the next two years. This wonderful feeling inside her would still be there. She hadn't known this afternoon that she was making a choice between following the herd and finding this new, strange, wonderful feeling of strength. But it *had* been a choice, and with a deep, steady happiness Peggy Farrell knew she had chosen the better part.

THE END

Her chin shot up again. "Mother's always let me choose my own friends."

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CHOCOLATE FROSTING

No doubt everyone has a recipe for cake that's just waiting for a good chocolate frosting to top it off. Here's Kate's simple recipe for frosting that will make your mouth water:

3 squares unsweetened chocolate
1 14- or 15-ounce can sweetened condensed milk
2 tablespoons water
Dash of salt
½ teaspoon vanilla

Melt chocolate in top of double boiler. Add condensed milk gradually, mixing well, then add water and salt and blend. Cook 3 minutes over rapidly boiling water, stirring constantly. Remove from fire. Add vanilla and cool.

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FOOD FOR FUN

DESSERT DUTY . . .

Sick of just plain pie and milk for dessert? Why not try something on your very own and surprise the rest of the family? Pretty nearly everybody likes chocolate, so how's about a CHOCOLATE MOUSSE . . .

Separate 5 eggs, putting the yolks and whites in different bowls. Break up ½ pound dark sweet chocolate into pieces and add to them 5 tablespoons cold water in a heavy pan. Place this over a low fire, stirring until chocolate melts. Remove from the heat and stir in the beaten egg yolks. Add the 5 stiffly beaten whites and mix well. Pour into small paper cases or cups and set in refrigerator for at least four hours.

Serve with a spoonful of whipped cream on top of each portion. Even the kid brother will thank you for this one.

MEXICAN MASTERPIECE!

You want to knock Mom's eye out, but you haven't too much money to work with? Here's the answer. That super-special Mexican dish, CHILI CON CARNE.

First, get a heavy iron frying pan. If possible, heat it. Put in it a tablespoon of butter or beef drippings. When this is hot, add a pound of top round ground and brown it well, breaking it up and turning it over and over to get crisp. Now put it in a big greased casserole or pot, over a medium flame.

Add a No. 2 can of red kidney beans and a No. 2 can of tomatoes. Season with 1½ teaspoons chili powder and add salt and pepper to taste.

Cut up a medium onion in small pieces and crush 2 small cloves of garlic. Fry these in the frying pan with some more butter until they are a rich brown. While this is going on, seed a small green pepper, chop it up fine and add it to the meat and vegetables in the pot. Then toss in the browned garlic and onion.

Let the whole concoction cook slowly for three-quarters of an hour. Stir and turn it often to be sure it doesn't stick and burn. Just before it finishes cooking, thicken a bit with a little butter and flour rubbed together over the fire. Serve from the casserole or pour into a deep platter.

A big wooden bowl of green salad adds the finishing touch.

Try it, and watch Mom's eyes bulge!

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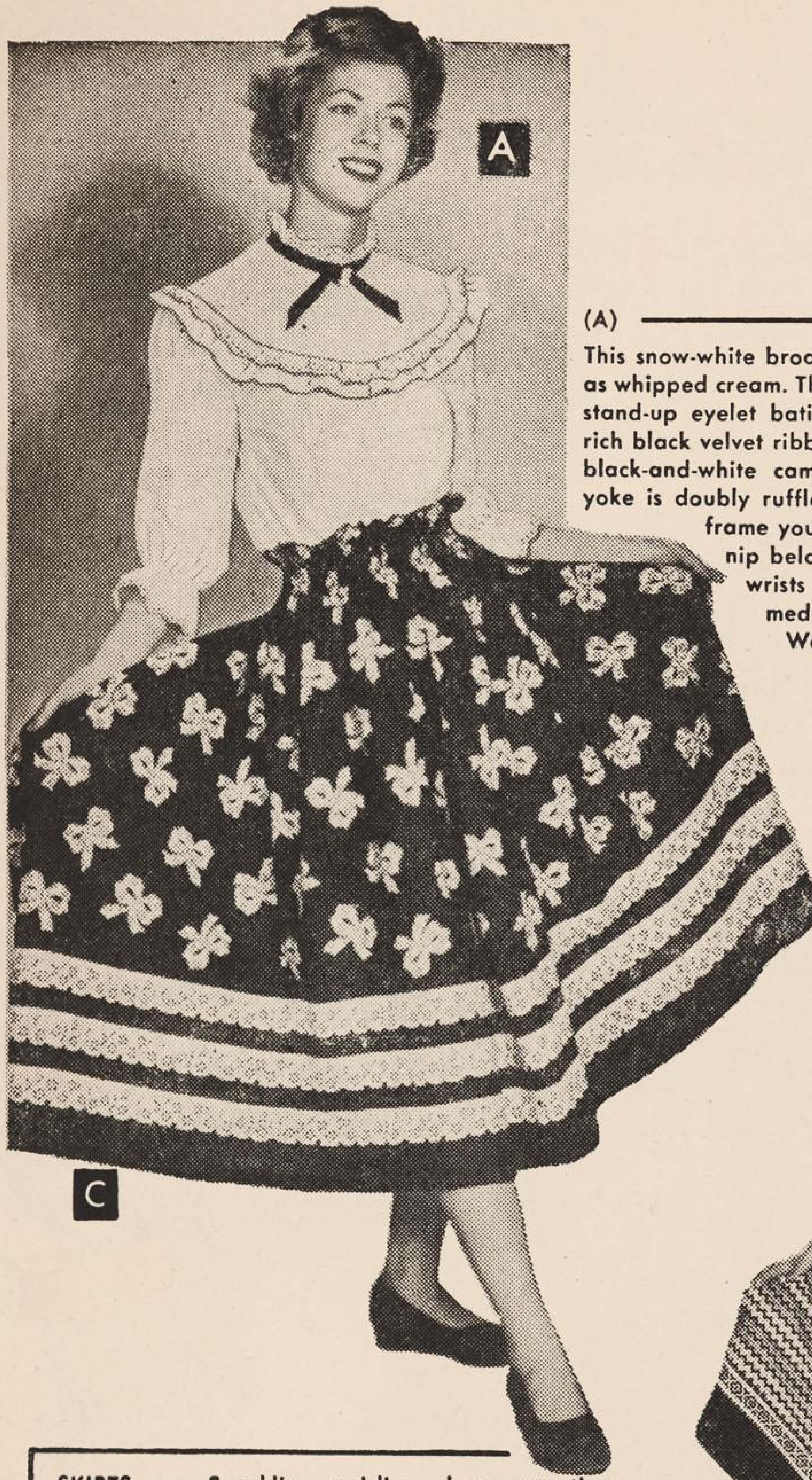

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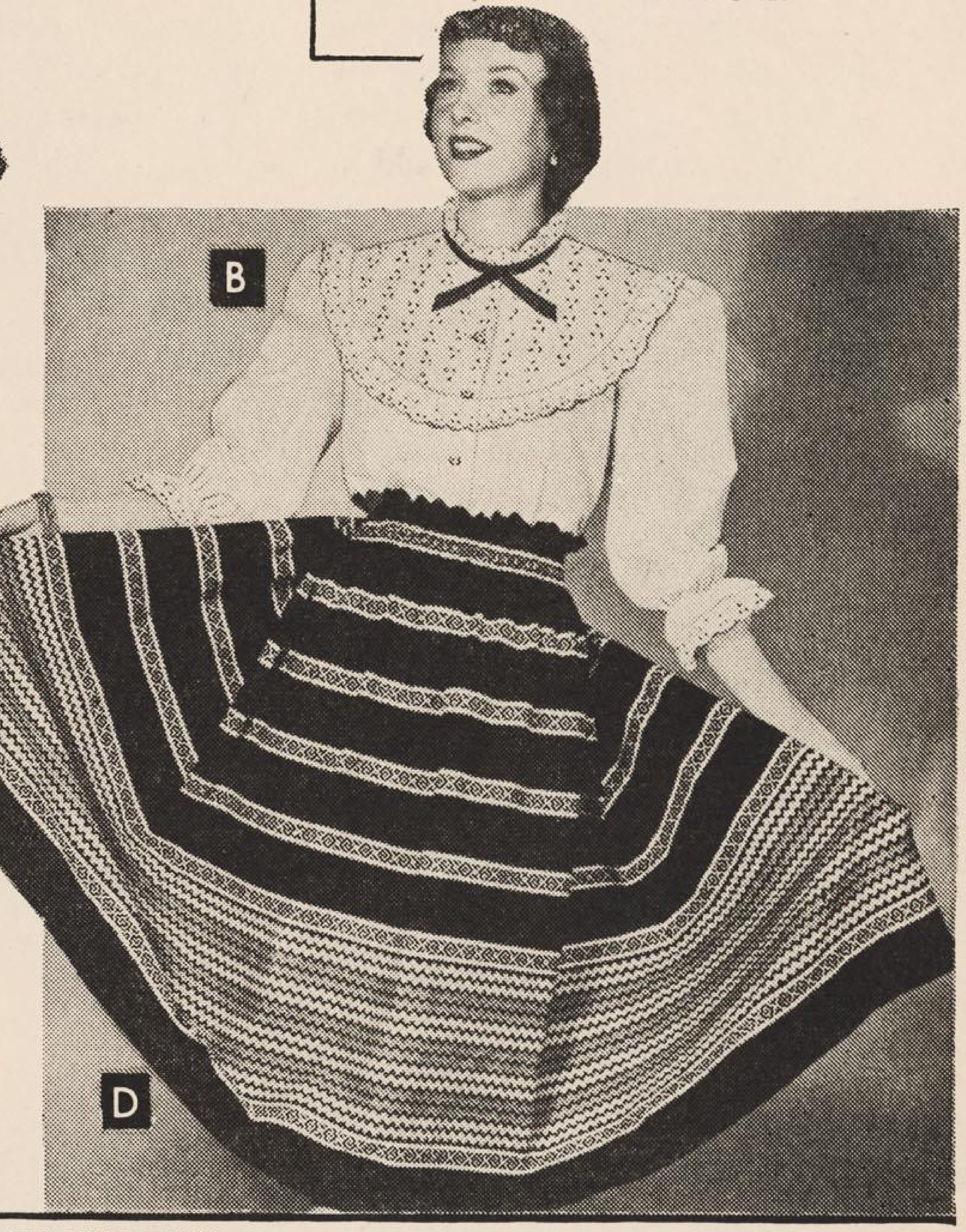

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